

# COUNTRY LIFE

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THE MARCHIONESS OF DOWNSHIRE.

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THE Journal for all interested in

Country Life and Country Pursuits

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\* \* A list of the Hunts of the United Kingdom is published as a Supplement to COUNTRY LIFE this week.

## RURAL HOUSING AND MORALITY.

NATURALLY, the housing agitation has brought forth many new suggestions for putting up cheap cottages, mainly of the wooden box or cement box type. But before they are adopted, we hope that they will be carefully scanned. Those dwellings at a hundred or anything under a hundred and fifty pounds are likely to be ugly and sure to be small. In a while they will become hovels and be overcrowded at that. It would perhaps be considered harsh to say that self-respect cannot exist in a poor dwelling. In exceptional men and women it can be and has been maintained amid the worst surroundings; but we have to legislate not for the

saint, but for the average human being. When the British housewife finds her belongings crowded into a narrow space which the children keep untidy, when nothing she can do will make the place look home-like and nice, she would not be human if she did not incline to fall into the ways of a slattern. Her mate too often escapes from the din and dirt by going to the public-house. Here, then, are potent reasons for not only building cottages, but building them well. One true remark which found its way into the Bedford irenicism was that the cottage should have beside it at least as much land as would supply vegetables for the household. Grant that, and an element of beauty is gained at once. Four cottages to the acre is a good standard. A cottage in a garden cannot possibly be as offensive as a cottage in a block or terrace. Nor is this difficult of accomplishment. Many landowners, with the Duke of Marlborough at their head, have agreed to part with land for cottage building at agricultural prices, which may be taken in the South of England to vary from twenty to forty pounds an acre. Next, the popular idea that beauty in a cottage depends on ornament and expensive work should be expunged, the most common sin is that of doing what should not be done. Good and simple are words that go together.

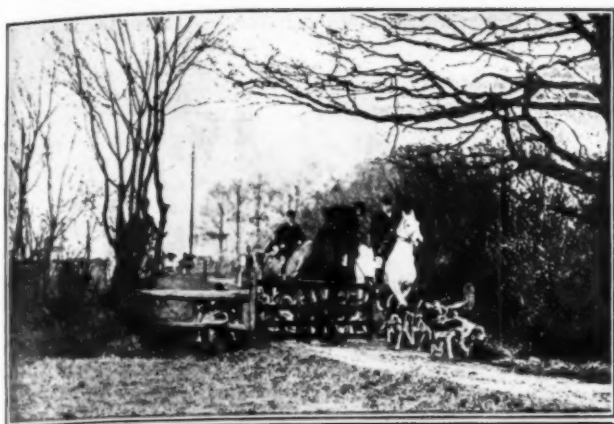
Now, consider the effect of these qualities on those who have to live in the cottage—the man, his wife and their children. The character of the dwelling matters less to the first-mentioned than to the others. His work, and therefore many of his interests, lie outside. Still, if he can live near the land on which he labours, he can have his meals at home—no slight consideration to one accustomed to eat his bread and cold bacon on the lee-side of a haystack or under the shelter of a hawthorn hedge. Still more, he can give his spare time—the occasional ten minutes as well as longer periods—to his garden. When they have a chance he and his kind are skilled with the spade and hoe, and if given the opportunity will not only grow potatoes and cabbages for the household, but surround them with a border of simple flowers such as the cottager loves. Probably his neighbours are doing very much the same sort of thing, and before long they begin to stimulate one another by friendly criticism and rivalry. In itself, a garden as a humanising agency is worth more than any allotment. Unknown to himself, the cottager has made a great advance when he not only works for utility, but is found doing something now and then—planting a rose or pruning a tree—to improve "the look of the place." In a word, he is changing a mere dwelling into a home. The interior of the house is the woman's domain, and it never will be completely home until she is as proud of the inside as the man is of the outside. All who have owned cottage property know how frequently it is misused. A family in a so-called model dwelling or in a cheap makeshift cottage view it with the same absence of sentiment with which they regard the third class railway carriage in which they journey to market. One is the same as another to them. But the country woman who once sets her mind to it soon gives the most comfortable and inviting air to her house. Usually, she is much more careful about this than her town relations, because her visiting friends often come from a distance and expect, after walking several miles, to be set down to a comfortable meal.

Most important of all is it that the children should have a place that will live in their mind and memory as home. Up to a certain age they are just like dumb animals in yielding this attachment to wherever it is they happen to live; but very soon the clean, subtle influence of the dwelling affects them. If it be but the lodging of a time, if they associate it with crowding and the irritation it implies, who can blame them for avoiding it as much as possible, seeking mischief outside instead of amusement within, and eventually quitting its walls without the slightest sentiment of regret? It makes all the difference if the place is one they have learned to love. No one who ponders all this can possibly be a party to the erection of buildings that can never be homes. They will oppose cottages of the wooden-box or cement type, however cheap they may be; they will resist all attempts to defile the country with rows of terraces. They will require each cottage to have a garden, and that it should be well and truly built.

## Our Portrait Illustration.

OUR portrait illustration is of the Marchioness of Downshire. Lady Downshire is a daughter of Mr. Edmund Benson Foster of Clewer Manor, Windsor, and was married to the Marquess of Downshire in 1907.

\* \* It is particularly requested that no permissions to photograph houses, gardens or livestock on behalf of COUNTRY LIFE be granted except when direct application is made from the offices of the paper. When such requests are received, the Editor would esteem the kindness of readers if they would forward the correspondence at once to him.



## COUNTRY NOTES.

**M**R. C. ADEANE'S suggestion that the land attack should be repulsed by local associations entirely unpolitical in their composition is worthy of close attention. The conditions of agriculture vary to an extraordinary extent according to the localities in which it is carried on, and it would be of public advantage to have a local committee formed of men known everywhere in the district who understand, practically and theoretically, the management of land. The activity of such a body might advantageously be extended beyond mere defence. It would be well for them to keep a vigilant eye upon the estates in their neighbourhood, and they could put in a timely word of advice when it was necessary to do so. When cottages were built they could do their best to get them made of a permanent and agreeable character. They could suggest where the cottages were really wanted; for example, in the case of labourers who had to walk three or four miles to their work. Local grievances of this kind are not only irritating in themselves, but they give a handle to those who wish to assail the land system and all that it means.

A comparison between the speech delivered by Mr. Lloyd George at Bedford and Lord Lansdowne's speech at Matlock Bath shows the relative position in which the two great parties stand. The points of agreement are more numerous than the points of difference. Both of them consider that the agricultural yield in this country is too small; that the agricultural labourers do not receive sufficient wages; and that there is not a sufficient number of cottages in this country. Both decry what is called the tied-house system. Mr. Lloyd George said that the farm labourer has no outlook, and so did Lord Lansdowne, each statesman using the same word. The remedies suggested are very different. Lord Lansdowne placed in the forefront of his programme a vigorous attempt to increase the number of occupying ownerships, and a not less vigorous attempt to deal with the housing difficulty, and he placed great emphasis on improved education. Mr. Lloyd George advocated a living wage, a decent home, gardens and small holdings. He says there should be greater security for improvements, and he laid stress on the need of better education. He also indicated that he would deal with the railway companies, with the present system of rating, State purchase of land, and the poor landlord whose land is not adequately equipped.

Among nations the United States has so far taken the leading part in inculcating the conscious duties of citizenship. Young people are taught, to take a small instance, that it is part of their duty to get rid of the house-fly; or, to take a larger question, that they ought to do whatever is in their power to conserve the resources of a State that hitherto has been very wasteful of them. The newly formed Cavendish Society in Great Britain is following this example. Its main idea is to form centres throughout the country through which men residing in the cities, towns and rural parishes may be guided and encouraged to take up such services to the State as are suitable for them. Speakers will be sent round to such centres and to the schools and universities to propagate this practical form of patriotism. The idea deserves every encouragement. On the part of a great portion of the population there is a disposition to view the ideals of citizenship with a certain amount of listlessness or apathy. It is not that the men are not capable

and willing to render service, but the advisability of their doing so has not been thrust upon their notice. Those who are taking the movement in hand are well fitted to carry it out. The circular-letter issued was signed, among others, by the Duke of Devonshire, Lord Selborne, Lord Loreburn and Mr. Alexander Patterson; while the speakers for the meeting on November 5th include some of the most illustrious and trusted public men of our time.

Our readers will, we are sure, peruse with the greatest interest and attention the selection of letters on the housing question which we publish in another part of the paper. They come from diverse quarters, and therefore the unity of voice with which they speak is remarkable. When Lord Curzon, Mr. Joynson Hicks, Lord Elibank, Sir Henry Craik, Lord Methuen and Mr. Ramsay Macdonald are in agreement, there would not seem to be much room for difference of opinion. In fact, there is not, either in the letters marked private or those sent for publication, a single dissentient voice. Everybody is agreed that at least a hundred thousand new cottages must be built, and that the greatest pains should be taken to make them real homes for the labouring classes; that is to say, plain, simple, economical houses, surrounded, as far as possible, with a garden or allotment. We hope that our readers will continue to press these views so that no district council or other authority will be allowed to put up cottages that are not suitable both to the locality and to the needs of those who use them; and that where a private owner is building, every pains will be taken to show him that the best economy lies in building a type of cottage that is good without being expensive.

### JUST SO.

"Is it *really* the end of the day?  
Does the day always end . . . just so?  
When the night-light burns with its feeble flare,  
And laughing phantoms dance here and there,  
When my clothes are folded and put away . . .  
Is that *really* the end of the day?  
When pink lights tip the hills in the west,  
And the homing dove flies to her nest?  
When the little trees long shadows throw,  
And I, with a smile, to Dreamland go . . .  
Does the day always end . . . just so?"

"All days should end, Little One,  
With the 'good-night' kiss of the sun;  
Then boys and girls to bed must go,  
But 'grown ups' wait while the fire burns low.  
Ah me! Ah me! what a time it takes,  
For who shall sleep while memory wakes?  
How long is my day? . . . That all depends . . .  
Yours often begins just as *mine* ends!  
When the tender dawn of a morning gray  
Folds my thoughts and hides them away . . .  
And I, with a sigh, to Dreamland go . . .  
Yes! the day always ends . . . just so."

ELIZABETH KIRK.

It is good news that the herring harvest, upon which so many hard-working men and women depend for their living, promises to be excellent; and in another part of the paper will be found an account of the unloading of the first great catch at Yarmouth. But the Western fishermen have also good cause for thankfulness; a fortnight ago that most mysterious of fish, the pilchard, came into St. Ives Bay. The pilchard fisher's life is always an anxious one, for a shoal may not come in for two or three seasons together, and in the meanwhile he must get his living as best he may by deep-sea fishing and odd jobs. Then one fine morning the cry of "Pilchard in the bay" will run through the town like a fire alarm, and men, women and even children will tumble out of their cottages, clothing themselves as they run, the pilchard boats will be launched and the seine nets prepared; then everyone will watch for the precise moment with breathless anxiety. If fortune favours them, it will come at last, and the silver harvest of the sea will be drawn in until the nets almost break and the boats are awash.

In the forty-second annual Report of the Local Government Board, issued early in the week, one of the most interesting paragraphs is that relating to the diminution of vagrancy. The tramp has been much less frequently visible during the past summer, and although the Report takes full account of the fact that during a trade boom there are naturally fewer unemployed, it credits a considerable part of the decrease in London to the unification of the casual ward administration. In the provinces the decrease has been still more noticeable.



It is comparatively rare nowadays to meet on country roads the tramps whose numbers were a menace a few years ago. Particularly is this the case in the counties which have adopted what is popularly known as the Bread-and-Cheese Ticket system. The result seems to show that by persevering in intelligent methods, it might be reasonably possible to get rid of a great nuisance, and at the same time benefit those homeless creatures whose lives must contain more than an average proportion of misery.

As the full story of the *Volturno* is unfolded by eye-witnesses, it speaks to us with more than the beauty and terror of an ancient tragedy. A fire at sea is dreadful at all times, and many a grim horror has been unwitnessed. On this occasion death claimed both crew and passengers as its victims, and there seemed no way of escape. The most sanguine of the five hundred who survived could not have nursed a hope after seeing one by one—about a sixth part of their number—succumb to one or other of the elements raging about them—fire and water. But seamanship, science and forethought proved not incapable of dealing even with this terrible situation. Once more the use of wireless telegraphy was vindicated. It brought rescuers, among whom Captain Barr of the *Carmania* proved to be the hero of the hour. Not only did he do all that man could do to get the passengers off, but he had the forethought to call an oil tank boat to the rescue. The literal pouring of oil on the waters had the effect of tranquillising the waves to such an extent that the *Volturno* became approachable. Thus the two adverse elements, fire and water, were successfully fought by wireless telegraphy and oil, aided by the resolution and bravery of the seamen.

A few weeks ago a very distinguished naturalist and sportsman wrote an article in our Shooting pages to persuade people that rearing pheasants was better for the country-side than depending on the wild supply. He based his argument on the fact that the pheasant is an omnivorous eater and apt to become a plague if allowed to wander among crops all the year round; whereas, if the eggs be secured at an aviary and hatched out under hens, the birds have only a brief period of freedom, and that at a time of the year when the most valuable crops of the farmer are in the barn. Our contributor, however, had not at that time enjoyed the opportunity of reading the little disquisition on natural history made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer last Saturday night, wherein he pointed out the destructiveness of the pheasants to such crops as turnips and mangolds. If the sacred bird has taken to satisfying his appetite with these solid fruits of the earth, it is evident that our contributor must begin to revise his opinions.

At a moment's notice it is impossible to deal satisfactorily with the Report of the Land Enquiry Committee, the first volume of which has just been issued by Messrs. Hodder and Stoughton. We can only sample it. Sport, for instance, is treated as though it were purely a landlord interest and a tenant's grievance; but where the landowner for any reason has given up shooting, the tenants are in the habit of deriving a very considerable share of their income from letting it. There are no signs whatever of their grumbling at the depredations of game when the shooting is in their own hands. A phrase used is itself a most telling criticism on previous legislation. The words we refer to are "the extermination of the rabbit pest." Considering that farmers are in the habit of exercising their right to kill rabbits under the Ground Game Act, it is curious that the multiplication of these creatures should have gone on to such an extent as to be called a pest. Further, greyhound coursing, which a few years ago seemed to have gone out of fashion, is now being revived all over the country by the farmers, a fact to which no reference is made in the report. "Winged game," again, is a misleading phrase. If it be granted that the pheasant commits a certain amount of depredation on the crops, the partridge must be exonerated. At any rate, it has ever been considered the farmer's friend. Thus the game section is incomplete and inaccurate.

The committee seem to have been as much exasperated at what they call the tied cottage system as they are at the pilferings of the pheasant. The ground they take is that the labourer is at the mercy of his employer when he is liable not only to be dismissed from work, but to be turned out of his cottage at a week's or a month's notice. No one seems to have divined that the simple issue out of this difficulty was to secure longer engagements. The plan of hiring labour by the year is found to work remarkably well in various parts of the country, and there the tied cottage is far from being a grievance. If wages are to

rise naturally, the farm labourer must secure for himself not fixity of tenure, but greater mobility. In the South of England far more than in the North, rated wages differ not only in various parts of the same county, but in parishes and even on adjoining farms. If the labourer were in the habit of once a year looking out where he could obtain the best wages and the most comfortable house, there would be no room for a Wages Board. But the enquirers have evidently been obsessed with the politics of their subject and blind to its economy. We do not think that anyone practically engaged in agriculture will be impressed with what is said about the farmer's insecurity of tenure. On Lord Crewe's estate in Cheshire twelve months is the rule of tenancy, and it is a saying there that the year engagement is the longest one. Here, again, the theory of the politician has been preferred to actual practice. During the depression farmers were so let down by the long leases which they had taken then that they have now gone to the opposite extreme, and two years is probably the most popular period.

A great sportsman, once a champion and still alive, has a favourite saying that the best habit to cultivate in all games and pastimes is the habit of winning. George Duncan would appear, after a very long novitiate, to have acquired this at last. Until the last week or two he was known to possess all the qualities that make a renowned golfer except the habit of winning. Over and over again he seemed to be just on the point of achieving the highest distinction and failed by a hair's breadth. But his victory over James Braid in the *News of the World* Tournament has evidently inspired him with that confidence which is essential to success. He played in the French Open Tournament like one who believed in himself from the beginning and, after the first round, he never looked behind him, but went on conquering and to conquer. In other words, he has gained a position from which it will now be very difficult to dislodge him. The French Open Tournament was a very great success and attracted a brilliant entry. James Braid, who was runner-up, played with all the old determination, and it was a near thing between him and the victor. Probably the two may have to fight out the supremacy on a future occasion, when Braid has completely recovered from his eye trouble.

#### EPITAPH ON A FOX-TERRIER.

##### LAMENT.

Oh, Toby dear, to think it should to this come,  
Now naught is left to say but Pax Tobyscum.

##### HOPE.

The grass grows green on Toby's grave,  
The thought that comes as I draw close is  
Can he nothing be but dust?  
Is there not metempsychosis?

So full of life he was when here,  
Small stretch 'tis of imagination  
To assume he's undergone  
Some wondrous kind of transmigration.

Higher or lower—who can tell?  
Help me, shades of old Pythagoras;  
Has Toby man or mouse become?  
Wave your philosophic flag o'er us.

In the old days in the fields  
Hunting small game was his habit;  
Can it be that, tit for tat,  
He is now hunted as a rabbit?

No! Surely he has risen higher,  
Fast though he ran he now goes faster,  
And, mounted on a well-bred flyer,  
Of foxhounds has become a master.

A correspondent sends us an interesting account of a conversation he had recently with a Canadian who is over here at present on business connected with army remounts. The plan that has been in operation in the Dominion for about seven years appears to be working very well. By it the Government lets a farmer have a stallion for the season at a nominal cost. Of course, very great care is taken to see that the farmer is worthy of the trust reposed in him. Careful enquiries are made and his fitness is vouched for by those in a position to know. It is a condition that he should let out the horse for use with approved mares at a nominal fee, and the Government reserves



itself the right to acquire the progeny on equitable terms. This is a very rough outline of a scheme which we hope to have more fully explained in a future issue. It is working very well, and there seems to be a prospect that there will be an overplus of remounts available for English use. The character of horse may be inferred from the fact that only thorough-bred sires are used, although the mares are very often cross-bred. The thorough-bred used on a percheron produces one of the best types of remount.

In England we regard the housing question, both rural and urban, as of so great moment that we forget that it has also a humorous side. And it has been left to M. Cochon in

Paris to demonstrate the possibilities of the situation. Instead of indulging in discussion and calling meetings, he has adopted the more drastic methods of forming camps in the public squares and collecting homeless children; while he besieges the houses of the city councillors with his forces and is not satisfied until the children have been suitably lodged. Perchance our grievances in this country have not reached such an acute stage, while our temperament favours less emotional methods; and, as far as the metropolis is concerned, our county councillors are hedged by so much state and mystery that few could tell where they dwell. But excellent jest as it is for all Paris, we wonder whether the councillors, whose domesticities are thus outraged, really appreciate the humour of the situation.

## THE AUTUMN BEAUTY OF THE BROADS.

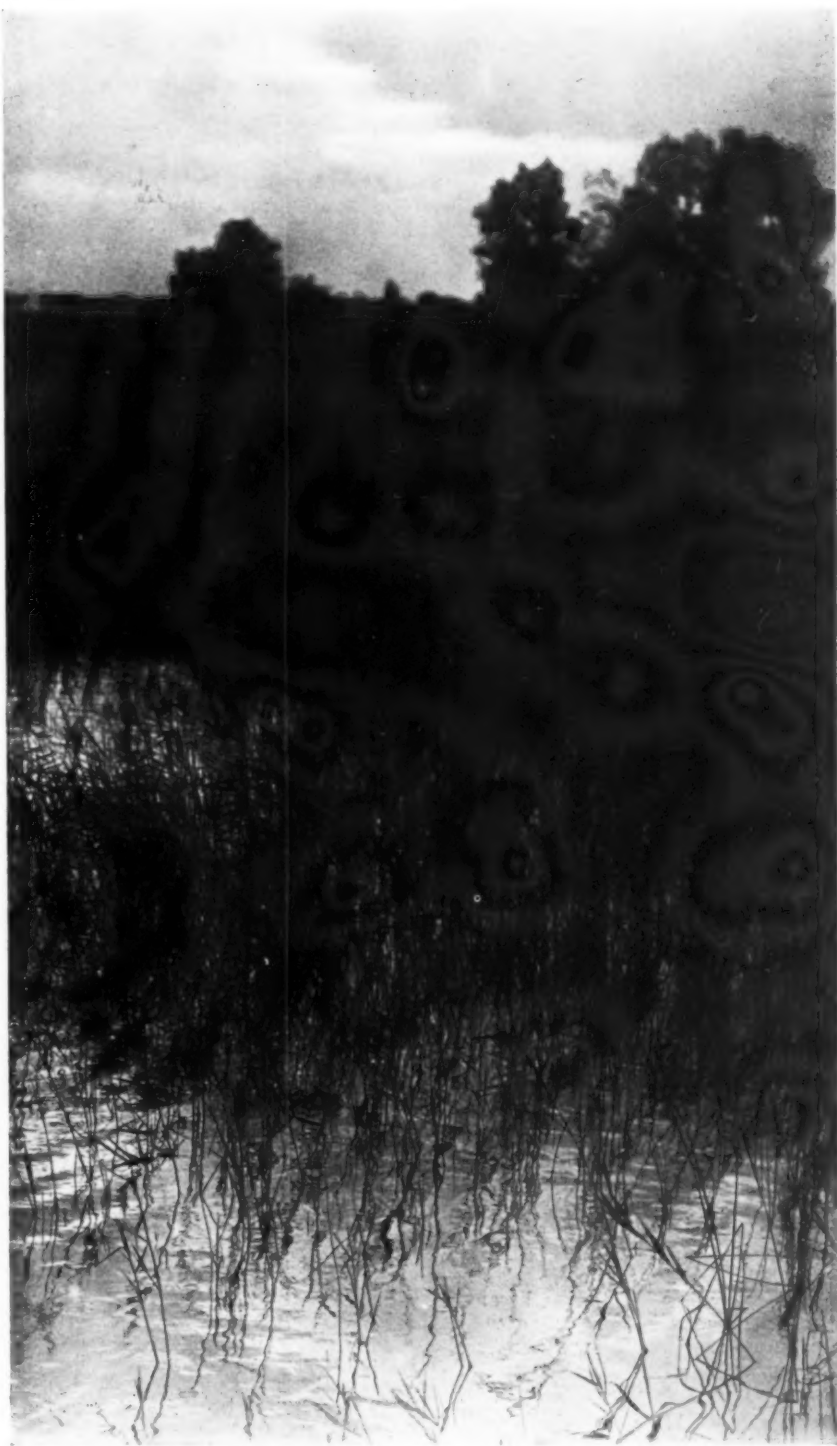
IN the Norfolk Broadland, when autumn has rusted the sword-blades of the sedge and tinged the bog mosses in the

rush marsh with the hectic flush of decay, there are days of such magic beauty that one cannot conceive how land, water and a translucent haze combine to create it. At noon of one such day there was not a breath of wind, and every reed by the riverside, every yellow leaf lingering on the salallows, and each seeding willow-herb by the dykeside was as motionless as though under a spell of enchantment. The water in river, broad and dyke, without a ripple on its surface, was one far-spreading mirror, here and there having a gilded frame of withered sedge, and everywhere reflecting its fenny borders with such clear actuality that a sudden inversion of the scene would have made no perceptible change in it. Looking into the blue depths of a broad, one saw white-winged seagulls circling and flocks of starlings wheeling, apparently, in a sub-aqueous sky. Even an air-borne atom of seed-down, plucked by a goldfinch from a tall marsh thistle, had its counterpart suspended in the still water, and, still more strange to see, the beads of dew on a down-bent reed-stem were mirrored there as well. In the distance, so indistinguishable were sky and water that some coots which had paddled out of an islet of reeds seemed to be poised in mid-air. Indeed, so like a fading mirage was the scene where a low

belt of reeds thinned out towards the open water that one was scarcely convinced of its real existence, while the wonderful

hues of the landscape—the pink-flushed purple of water-stained rushes, the clouded amber of wastes of bleaching fen-grass, and the rich ruby stain on the shield-shaped leaves of the water dock—all seen through an atmosphere radiant with golden sunlight, helped to impress one with the idea that some magician was at work, conjuring up a scene from Fairyland.

The holiday cruising folk, with their yachts, pleasure wherries and motor-launches, had disappeared from the rivers and broads, and when I rowed my little gunning-punt out of a reedy creek no other boat was afloat on the broad. The reed and sedge warblers, too, were gone, and I missed, in a thicket of bog myrtle, the metallic trilling of the shy grasshopper warbler. There was, however, no lack of bird life. Fieldfares, lately come from across the North Sea, were perched among the branches of the rugged alders; grey-backed crows, cawing raucously, were searching for water-snails among the weeds left on the bank by a dyke-drawer; goldfinches, fluttering like golden-winged moths, were feeding on the seeding thistles; and in a clump of salallows a black-capped reed bunting was singing its low twittering song. Water-fowl seemed more numerous than in the holiday season, for they no longer spent



"WHERE A LOW BELT OF REEDS THINNED OUT TOWARDS THE OPEN WATER."

the whole of the daylight hours in hiding among the reeds. Coots, moorhens and great crested grebes were paddling far out in the open water, while a family party of dabchicks were diving in the shallows of an inlet fringed with yellowing sedge. On the brown slope of a distant field, where the ploughmen had lately been at work, a flock of seagulls were foraging among the furrows, their snow white wings gleaming in the aftermath of summer sunshine. A few meadow pipits were still soaring and singing, but the sweetest bird-music came from the midst of a dense bed of reeds, where a little flock of bearded titmice were plucking seeds from the downy reed plumes. Drawing my boat up close to them, I heard a succession of notes sounding like the clashing of tiny cymbals, and once a handsome little tawny buff cock bird came so near me that I could see the wisp of reed feather he held in his bill.

Early in the afternoon the shimmering haze became less translucent, and by four o'clock, although the marsh dykes stretching westward were like lanes of fire leading to the setting sun, a silvery mist began to rise from the broad, dimming its surface and blurring its reflections of bird and tree. Cool currents of air—they could hardly be called breezes—from time to time cleared the mist away from the open water, but familiar objects on the shore, seen through a filmy vaporous veil, grew every minute more nebulous and phantasmal. The well-drained marshes seemed to have suddenly reverted to a state of primitive fen, and it was easy to understand how the old-time fenmen came to believe that their watery wildernesses were haunted, not only by ghosts in human form, but also by spectral birds and beasts. Yet, although the mist magnified fieldfares till they seemed as big as wild pigeons, and distorted pollarded willows into fantastic shapes, its transformation of the scene was entirely pleasing. Crude and garish colours were toned down until they blended harmoniously with the softer and more delicate hues, and when the suffusing sunlight was slowly withdrawn, exquisite opalescent tints revealed themselves where the mist drifted over the still water.

Just before sunset the effect of the ebbing tide became perceptible in the navigable dyke connecting the broad with the river, and a marshman, whose houseboat fire was mingling a thin stream of smoke with the mist, raised his eel-net from the bed of the dyke and sat down in the stern of his boat to keep a watch for passing wherries. A heavy rain and a "fresh" of water in the river and dykes were needed, he said, to set the eels moving down stream, but he hoped to find a stone or more of them in his net in the morning. While I was chatting

with him the sky became lurid, as with the smouldering embers of a vast fire, and the mist became rose-tinted where it spread over the western level of the marshland. A "rokey" (foggy) night and a red sunset betokened, according to the eel-catcher, a continuance of fine weather. He was living, as nearly as possible, the life of the fenman of a century ago, and his knowledge of many things connected with the marshes seemed to come to him instinctively. It was a part of his natural heritage, and made him at home in this misty solitude. As the dusk deepened, and the fiery splendour of the sky was succeeded

by an amber afterglow, he settled down complacently to his night's vigil, and the light of his cabin fire was for a while a beacon to me as I rowed homeward across the broad. But I soon lost sight of it. Like the low sedgy shores, the wide-spreading marshes and the mazy network of dykes, it was hidden by the mist. My progress, which at midday had seemed to be through clear aerial space, was now, apparently, through cloudland. Only by standing up in my boat could I see the tops of the willows and alders rising above the white coverlet night had drawn over the sleeping earth. At long intervals I heard the cry of a coot, and once an owl flew low over a reed bed. The air had grown chill, but the bats had not yet begun their winter sleep in the upper storeys of the marsh windmills. Dimly against the starlit sky I could discern a great noctule bat flitting to and fro, and when I lost sight of it I could still hear its queer chattering squeak. Stealthy rustling amid the reeds and sedge betrayed the nocturnal activity of shy, creeping things, such as field-mice and water-voles; but when I climbed the slope of the uplands and

W. A. DUTT.



THE WIDE-SPREADING MARSH.

looked down on the mist-mantled marshland all seemed as silent there as on a frozen sea.

## TRANS-HIMALAYA.

Discoveries and Adventures in Thibet (Vol. III.), by Sven Hedin. (Macmillan.)

THERE are few people who know Thibet as Sven Hedin does. We should like the gentleman who once at a public dinner remarked to him, "Now, tell me what was the hotel accommodation like where you were travelling?" to read the third volume of the above work. It is a record of hard work and difficulties successfully overcome, which cannot be enumerated here. In the preface the author states that he intended to describe his recollections of Japan, Korea and Manchuria, concluding with an account of the homeward journey through Siberia. He had, however, so much material dealing with the source of the Indus, the highlands of West Thibet and the Sutlej Valley that he decided not to encroach



on his space with an account of countries already well known. In Thibet he had no rivals. Three chapters contain a succinct historical review of all the journeys of exploration which have touched the margin of the central chains of the Trans-Himalaya, and show how immense was the area of this mountain system which was completely unknown previously. Three other chapters contain *résumés* of those journeys which had the sacred lake of Manasarowar and the source regions of the great Indian rivers for their goal. No European nor any Asiatic of any note had previously penetrated to the true sources of the Indus or Sutlej, while the position of the true source of the Brahmaputra had never been determined. The first part of the book deals with the author's journey to Gartok, the capital of Western Thibet, including the crossing of the Jukti-hloma-la Pass (19,110ft.), the second highest traversed on this journey, the Ding-la (19,308ft.) being the highest. At Gartok the explorer had to wait for some time pending the arrival of more money, provisions, etc. These eventually overtook him at Gargunsa after he had set out. He measured the Gartong and the Singi-Kamba, the head-waters of the Indus, and after some difficulty with the ice ascertained that the latter is not only the longer but the more voluminous of the two. He considers it probable that the Gartong carries, during the whole year, more water. The main object of the journey was to fill up the huge area of the middle Trans-Himalaya. The difficulties and hardships which he endured in pursuit of this ideal are graphically related. He loves the nomads and he loves Thibet, yet after two years on its storm-tossed heights his thoughts turned longingly to India. At Tokchen he revelled in the thought that only one more high pass separated him from the shade of the Himalayan cedars. But his difficulties were not yet over, and many long weary marches had yet to be performed. After much delay he at length managed to travel along the Tso-mavang to Tirtapuri. In his *résumés* of the travels of early travellers to the sacred lake, Manasarowar, he alludes to the mystery surrounding the fate of Moorcroft, the veterinary surgeon, the first Englishman to reach its holy waters. He pays a well-deserved tribute to Antonio de Andrade, the first Jesuit in Thibet, who was born in 1580, and relates something of the privations and experiences which befel him. There is an interesting chapter on "Lamaism and Catholicism," illustrating the superficial similarity between the two. "The gigantic work that Catholic missions have accomplished for centuries in purely geographical investigations throughout Asia is worthy of the greatest admiration. They have opened roads into the heart of the largest continent of the world." Late in August the Shipki Pass was traversed, the Sutlej crossed, and on the 28th occur the words, "I slept in a proper bed!" No one who has not been absent for many months from civilisation can realise all that the words imply. At Poo lived the Hungarian philologist, Alexander Csoma de Körös, who became a lama for three years. The author gives sketches of the cell in which he dwelt.

The book is freely illustrated with the author's drawings and photographs, giving some idea of the difficulties which beset his path and the character of the country. Sir Sven Hedin is to be congratulated on the completion of a book which solves many of the difficulties connected with the geography of the mountainous system to the north of the Indus and the Sutlej.

## THE YARMOUTH . . . HERRING SEASON.

A MOST promising start has been made with the Yarmouth herring fishing this year, the first great catch having been taken on Saturday night. On Sunday herring were landed literally in millions. One boat had a catch of



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A DRIFTER OFF TO THE FISHING GROUNDS.

200,000 and several others had between 150,000 and 200,000. This news has an indirect as well as a direct importance. It

shows that, so far, the supply of this popular fish is not showing any sign of falling off. Very often of late it has been asserted in vague terms that the herring was suffering from destruction in its immature stages. The supply of whitebait is in itself supposed to be a very considerable drain upon the numbers, and there are other contributory causes for its diminution. But the quantity taken at Yarmouth goes far to show that these were false alarms. If the number of fish is not on the increase, at any rate it shows no signs of falling off. And this has an important bearing on an agitation that has been steadily kept up throughout the year for the purpose of rendering some help to the fishermen who have not been able to avail themselves of modern methods. Along the Eastern, Southern and Western Coasts a very great deal of distress has been experienced owing to the fact that the line-fishermen and the ordinary net fishermen have been so completely outdistanced by the trawler that they have practically been thrown out of work. In many parts they have had to depend for existence on the crab and the lobster. Unfortunately, the year has not been a good one for these crustaceans, and while the rest



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GETTING THE HERRINGS UP.

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of England has been prospering beyond the normal, the fishermen on the coast have been in very considerable distress. It has been recognised how useless it is to meet this state of things by declaiming against the wholesale destructiveness of the trawler. The steam trawler, after all, represents a new and effective means of catching fish, and to stop it altogether would be to put back the clock. Yet in saying this we do not wish to prejudge a very serious question that has been raised. The trawler, undoubtedly, in the course of his operations destroys a vast number of small and immature fish, and the question soon or late will have to be faced whether there are not means of avoiding these depredations. Even the inexhaustible sea must suffer at last if continually exposed to the process of subtraction and never to addition. But this is not the matter that primarily concerns the inshore fisherman. What he has to consider is the necessity of being able to keep up with his fellows, and the only way in which he can be helped is to put him in possession of a suitable vessel. How this can be done it is not easy to say. Some argue that if the small holder is helped to the land by means of deferred payments, the fisherman ought to be helped to a boat in the same way. In other words, it might be worth while to advance to him the sum needed for the purchase of a trawler. This need not go into the hands of one individual. From time immemorial fishermen have been in the habit of doing their work in groups, bound together by family ties. Oftenest a man and his sons used to work the same boat, and if there were not sons available, other relatives, such as brothers, cousins, nephews and so forth, were called upon to make up the crew. There is no reason why funds should not be provided to set such grouping as this going. The main objection is that fishing is one of the uncertain callings. With the most modern equipment a crew could not be absolutely certain of making an income. At least so they argue. But in practical life the uncertainty has been reduced far below the point at which it originally

moderate premium, and in these days the prices received for fishing are so satisfactory that with ordinary good luck the borrowers ought to be able to repay at no unreasonable period. Moreover, the chances of a windfall seem to be greater



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LANDING THE HERRINGS.

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than ever. The luckiest boats on Saturday must have ensured a profit that would have gone far to clear away even a considerable debt—as debts are measured by the seashore. Nor is there much difficulty in finding a market for herring. Luckily, at Yarmouth there are abundant resources for curing the fish, and those that cannot be sold for consumption in their fresh state can easily be preserved for use as bloaters or kippers.

Prices are assured because the bloater and kipper in these days have attained to a respectability they used not to possess. In the North the herring used to be regarded as a sign of poverty. In hard times it was almost the only addition to the daily fare of bread and porridge. So true was this that it passed into a proverb, as when a stranger was invited into a house with the cordial welcome to "taste the taings till the herring's ready." The most usual way of cooking was to brander the herring on the fire, and the handiest implement for the purpose was the tongs. People who came from the South did not understand all this, and could not imagine how to present anyone with a herring was reckoned an insult. We remember the clergyman of a rural parish bringing home from a visit to the South a little barrel of pickled herring as a present to the sexton, who was also handyman to the rector. He was greatly affronted at the offer, and it was years before cordial relations were established again. These days seem to have gone for ever. The herring, in the various forms which it is made to assume by the deft hands of the cook, is accorded a place even in those restaurants and clubs at which the most fastidious come to eat.

It is a bad wind that blows good to nobody. The modern fondness for eating fish had turned trawling into a great industry. Unfortunately, at the same time it has left stranded those poor people who used to subsist on line and net fishing from their little sailing boats. They cannot compete with the steamers. Incidentally, we are afraid this may prove fatal to the fishing village, since the tendency of the trawlers is to collect at great centres like Hull and Grimsby. There they enjoy the very great advantage of working in union. The old sailing boat used



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AN AUCTION ON THE FISH WHARF.

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stopped. The harvest of the sea is only to a certain degree less assured than the harvest of the land. Financially, opinion is that the money could be lent quite safely. The risk is not so large but that insurance companies would cover it at a

to return to port whenever its catch was made, and once a day at least, whether anything were caught or not; but the trawlers go out in a fleet and a boat calls on each and takes its catch from it. There are great advantages, too, in having the



greatest quantity of fish at one or two railway stations, as this facilitates transport to the places of consumption. Thus it would appear that the only way to help the poor fishermen is, as we have said, to formulate a scheme for lending them sufficient money to buy trawlers of their own. When this is done they will follow their ancient occupation in a less picturesque form than they were accustomed to in youth, but undoubtedly it is the surest method of obtaining large supplies of fish and, consequently, of making a livelihood by that occupation.

There was a time when the herring harvest was a stand-by of the little sailing boats, but that is so no longer. We remember when the crofter population round the North of Scotland used to follow the herring right to the southern coast of England in their small vessels; but it is not worth while doing so now, because this department has been taken possession of by superior fleets. The most enterprising of the men have no doubt been able to keep in front of the movement, and consequently the Scottish accent is familiar at this time of the year at many of the southern seaports. As a rule, the Northerner is very well capable of taking care of himself;



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SCOTCH LASSES PACKING HERRINGS.

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but when there occurs a great upheaval of industry owing to the introduction of better machinery, many are stranded who scarcely deserve to be left in that position, and we trust that effectual steps will be taken to set them on their feet again.

## AGRICULTURAL NOTES

### THE LIVESTOCK DEVELOPMENT SCHEMES.

**N**OW that the various livestock officers have been appointed, farmers are beginning to learn what the Board of Agriculture intends for them under the Development Grant. Firstly, it is very evident that the number of subsidised animals are far and away too few, and that it is bad to limit the assistance to occupiers of agricultural holdings which do not exceed one hundred acres in extent or, if exceeding one hundred acres, are of an annual value for purposes of Income Tax not exceeding £100. For these smaller men are not likely to provide the high-class bulls and stallions that are to be given grants. It will be seen that I have not mentioned boars, as many a small farmer would be able to pay his ten or fifteen guineas for a young boar, but as regards these no grants are available for individuals, such grants being made to societies only. Now reverting to the provision of bulls, it must be remembered that the Board of Agriculture does not buy the bull, but makes an annual grant for four years of £12 to an individual and £15 to any society for five years for each bull provided. But this sum will not go far when it is considered that the bull must be a high-class one—say £50 or £60 as a low figure—because not only will these bulls have to be approved, but they will also have to pass the tuberculin test. And these are two ideals that will bring home buyers into direct competition for the very animals that are in request for the export trade; and then it must be remembered that high-class bulls must be taken as pedigree. If this be so, shall

we have a set of conditions similar to that prevailing at present in Ireland? It is known that the Irish Department of Agriculture has practically gone in entirely for Scotch shorthorns of non-milking strains as premium bulls, and that great resentment is felt in Limerick, Clare and other dairy districts because bulls from milking strains are not provided and, in consequence, the yield of milk has gone back. This same problem at present faces the livestock officers in the West of England. The dairy farmers of Somerset demand that the bulls that are to be approved in their midst shall be from established milking strains, or they prefer to use their own, which, though non-pedigree, are generally bred from good milking dams. Several farmers have already learnt by experience that full pedigrees are not always associated with heavy milk yields. There is also another problem cropping up which affects both Gloucester and Somerset; in the former county is a very prolific, hardy race of pigs known as the Gloucester Spots, while in Somerset is another similar breed known as the Sheeted Breed. They constitute rare bacon. Are these to be gradually bred out in favour of outside breeds, some of which are known to be unsuitable to the localities,

or should an endeavour be made to select these and to improve the breed rather than to produce cross-breeds? The first cross may be all right, but what about the second and the crosses onward? These are a few of the difficulties that are present at the starting of a scheme which is evidently intended to drive farmers into combination rather than to encourage their individual efforts.

### ENGLISH BUTTER v. MARGARINE.

Anyone making a tour of the shows of England cannot fail to note the great decrease of entries in the English butter classes. No matter whether it is a national show or a mere village fixture, the decline is there all the same. Now, that being so, there must be a reason. Undoubtedly one of the causes is the substitution of the milk churn for the butter churn in many farm dairies. In plain terms, this means that the milk is being sold instead of being made up into produce, as it formerly was, especially by those possessing small dairies of milch cattle. The cause of this is not far to seek. Firstly, the old market cart has fallen into desuetude; then, the feminine members of the household do not want all the work and worry, more especially as a cold hand and a warm heart were great desiderata, much sought after by young farmers; then, there is the difficulty of sale. Real farmhouse butter is not sought after by large stores in the city, who prefer to buy their requirements in hundredweights or tons, well knowing that it has been subjected to manipulations, though hardly to the extent that it was prior to the passing of the Butter Bill. In consequence of this changing condition of affairs, the average dairy farmer's position as regards butter is turned from that of a producer into that of a purchasing consumer. This being so, the great butter-producing countries of the world, such as New Zealand and Australia, and even, in a lesser scale, Ireland, are desirous of reaping to the fullest extent the English trade. But they find that they cannot do so under present conditions. They find that it is practically impossible to obtain a single pound of either New Zealand or Australian butter as such and unadulterated. It is well known that this butter, after leaving the Land of the Southern Cross, becomes expanded, and many a ton is worked in before it reaches the consumer. Now this is bad enough, but there is the competition of margarine by substitution for butter. This is a growing grievance. When the Margarine Act was passed, margarine was made from oleo fats and milk. Now in a great measure it is made from vegetable fats and milk. The contention in the olden days was that, as margarine was derived from animal substance, there was little harm in allowing it to be coloured to resemble butter. Under present conditions the feeling has run so high that a special conference to be presided over by Captain Muirhead Collins, Acting High Commissioner for Australia, has been

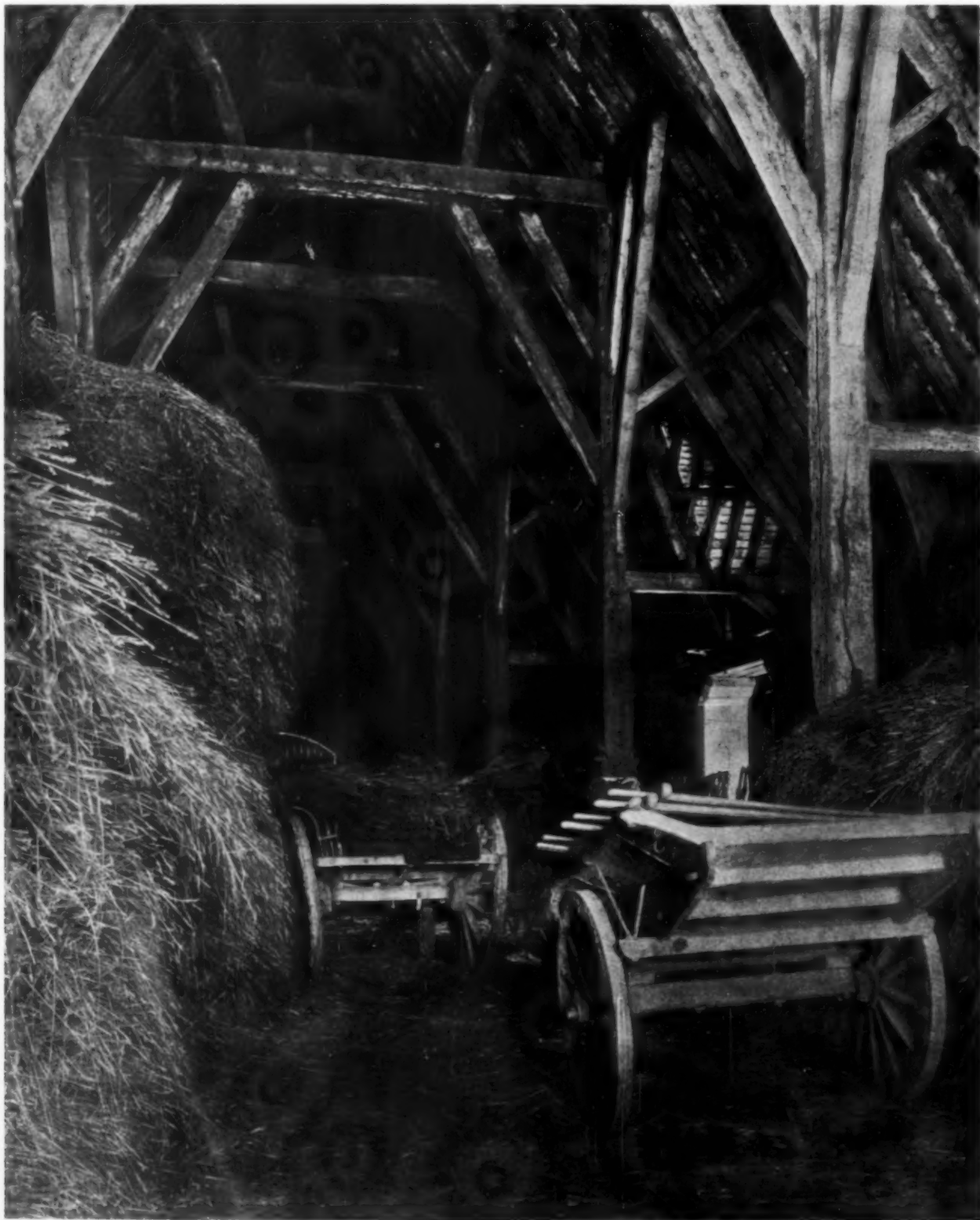
convened for Wednesday, October 22nd, to consider the whole question of the substitution of margarine for butter and to appoint a deputation to wait upon either Mr. Runciman or Mr. John Burns. The movement is being supported by several agricultural societies in this country.

#### THE DAIRY SHORTHORN.

I am sure that the intended retirement of Mr. F. Webb of Babraham from the secretaryship of the Dairy Shorthorn Society will be received with regret throughout the country. Mr. Webb was one of the pioneers in the movement to establish the pure-bred dairy shorthorn on its own. In the early days this was no easy matter, and, as in nearly all movements that have succeeded in the end, there was a very strenuous opposition at first. In the good days when beef was considered the desideratum of shorthorn breeding, any skinny bad beast was classed as a milking

animal. Those who had faith in the future replied that though a good milker, by reason of the heavy drain on her system, might at times be a bit bare of flesh, still, when she was dried off, she would fatten or lay on flesh quite as fast as beef-makers. The value of milking shorthorns, and more especially so if they have well-authenticated milking records, was shown by the high prices made at the late Mr. George Taylor's sale at Cranford and the high values that are still given for them. There is likely to be a very large number of dairy shorthorns on view at the forthcoming Dairy Show, there being forty-one entries in the class for shorthorn cows and twenty-eight for shorthorn heifers either entered in, or eligible for, Coates' Herd Book. There are twenty-five entries of shorthorn cows and fifteen shorthorn heifers not eligible for entry. One hundred and nine shorthorns creates a record at the Dairy Show.

E. W.



Frederick H. Evans.

THE ABBOT'S BARN AT GREAT COXWELL, OXFORDSHIRE.

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# TALES OF COUNTRY LIFE.

## MISS MACINTYRE'S FIRST MEET.

BY  
J. M. DODINGTON.

"Oh, I say, mother! Really, you know, it's a bit too thick! Why, the girl has never seen hounds in her life!"

"I know, dear," Ted's mother replied, soothingly; "but she's mad to go, poor child. The chance of her life, she says! And I'll send old Honeybun out with her on one of the carriage horses. He can take her along lanes and through gates and so forth—I daresay they'll get a glimpse of hounds now and then."

"Oh, my hat!" murmured the son.

"So that you needn't bother about her at all," Mrs. Alton continued, comfortably, "except, perhaps, just to talk to her a little at the meet—you see, the poor girl won't know a soul."

Ted grunted unamiably. What a fine-looking fellow he was, the mother thought, as she proudly contemplated the six feet of clean-limbed, well-groomed English manhood on the hearth-rug!

"But I say!"—Ted's gloomy countenance was irradiated by a gleam of hope—"she hasn't got any togs. Told me yesterday she'd never had a real habit in her life."

"I know, poor child—but I'm lending her an old one of mine."

"Jee-hosh-aphat!" Her irreverent son's clear blue eye wandered quizzically over her substantial figure, his lips expanded into a broad grin.

The mother laughed good-humouredly. "An old one, I said—built before Anno Domini had treated me so unkindly."

"Please, may I come in?" cried a high-pitched voice, and, with a perfunctory rap on the half-closed door, a slender, dark-haired girl bounced (so, at least, the soured Ted unkindly characterised the movement) into the room. She took no notice of the frowning young man, but: "Oh!" she cried rapturously, advancing with a rush to Mrs. Alton's chair, "I've been out looking at Dick Turpin again. He's perfectly sweet! Oh, it is kind of you to let me have him to-morrow!"

"Are you thinking of riding Dick Turpin, Miss MacIntyre?" Mr. Alton asked, with a well-simulated yawn.

Peggy's sparkling dark eyes did not detect the latent antagonism in the blue ones regarding her so coldly. "Oh, yes," she cried, "isn't it simply ducky-dear of your mother? I am looking forward to it. Of course, I've never ridden anything but a pony before, and it will be absolutely gorgeous to be mounted on a real horse!"

"Hum-m-m, I shouldn't ride him too much on the curb, if I were you. He has a very light mouth."

"What? Oh, no—no, of course. No, I won't," Miss Peggy endeavoured to look wise, but as a matter of fact, she had never had double reins between her fingers. The rough Highland ponies which had hitherto been her only acquaintance with the equine race had never had more iron in their mouths than a simple snaffle. Sometimes she had guided them by a halter, frequently by nothing more than a smart slap on either side of the neck.

"Of course, he may want a little bringing to book when hounds start going—he's jolly keen, you know, but—"

"My dear Ted, Honeybun will be there," interrupted Mrs. Alton, "he'll see that Peggy is all right. You trust yourself to Honeybun, my dear. He's an excellent man—and I'll tell him to keep close to you all day."

"On the carriage-horse! Oh, my hat!" again murmured her irreverent son.

"Certainly mother's old habit must be made of elastic," said Ted to himself as, jogging next morning to the meet at Ornsby Hall, his eyes rested on the slim figure a few paces ahead. "Wonderful how it seems to fit. Pretty in her way, too—and, yes, quite a good seat—" He watched the girl sway easily to her horse's stride. "But her hands—oh, lor! I say, look out there!" he shouted, and trotted sharply forward, for in pulling aside to allow of the passing of a huge motor-car, Peggy's unaccustomed fingers had dealt so strenuously with the curb that Dick Turpin reared wildly in the air.

"What are you doing?" the young man cried, angrily, as he reached the girl's side. "For Heaven's sake loosen your curb. Let go your curb, d'ye hear?" he repeated, more loudly and angrily than before, as the girl stared at him uncomprehendingly,

and, leaning forward, himself loosened the reins from between the clutching fingers. "You'll drive him mad if you job his mouth like that!"

"Oh-h-h, I see. Sorry—I've never had four reins in my hands before," said Peggy, frankly. "The lower ones, you mean? I see; right you are. I'll try to remember to leave them loose on his neck."

"All the same, you may want to hold him when he sees hounds," explained Ted, somewhat mollified by the open confession. "But, I say, d'ye know, I really think you'll have enough of it if you just jog quietly home when hounds move off to draw. It will be a longish hack, you know, when you're out of practice and all that—"

"What!" With fiery indignation Peggy turned upon her counsellor. "Go home! Without hunting! Why, you must be mad! This is going to be the day of my life!"

"Of your death, more likely!" Ted growled as he turned away. "Mind you stick to her, Honeybun," he murmured in the old man's ear; "she knows absolutely nothing about the job. Keep her to the roads whatever you do, or she'll break her neck as sure as eggs is eggs!"

To Peggy everything was glorious: the soft, moist, southerly breeze, the faint haze clinging round the tree-tops, the bitter-sweet scent of dying leaves. Not so did the winter approach in her own land—at one step came snowstorm and biting cold. Good, kind Mrs. Alton, tenant of her father's grouse moor away up yonder on the shores of the grey North Sea! How sweet of her to have brought her south on a visit to this delectable English country! To ride to a meet—to follow hounds! Oh, wonderful! The dream of her life had come true! She uttered a small shriek of delight as they turned in between the massive pillars which flanked the entrance to Ornsby Hall, and saw on the green lawn before the beautiful old Elizabethan house the crowd of dappled bodies and waving sterns. "Oh the hounds, the hounds! Exactly as they look on Christmas cards. Oh, the darlings!"

"Look out! He's a bit gay at sight of 'em," Ted cried as the girl's excited utterance was cut short by a playful caper—buck and plunge combined—on the part of her mount.

"I—I don't wonder," panted Peggy. "So am I!"

At which reply her companion surveyed her with considerable approval. An approval which was, alas! but short-lived. "For God's sake catch hold of him! He'll be right in the middle of hounds," cried Ted in exasperated anxiety, as Dick Turpin took the bit in his teeth and bounded forward. More by kindly condescension on his own part than by any control exercised by the feather-weight on his back, he drew up before any damage was done, but not before the affrighted pack had scattered right and left before his tumultuous onset, and the huntsman was uttering curses, not loud, but very, very deep!

"If you please, miss," the judicious Honeybun interposed, "if you was to give 'im a bit of a gallop round the park, it would take a bit of the beans out of 'im, so to speak."

"That's right, Honeybun. . . . For Heaven's sake keep her away from hounds. And mind you take her straight home directly we move off." For a moment Ted's eyes followed the retreating backs of girl and man, then with a long sigh of relief he settled down to enjoy his day.

Five minutes later he was jogging in the wake of the pack to Tincleton Spinney—a sure find, as all followers of the Blankshire Hunt knew well. On this occasion it did not belie its reputation. Scarcely had hounds been thrown in when a whimper arose from the heart of the brake—another and another. Next instant came a fierce burst of melody from the whole pack.

"Tally-ho! Tally-ho! Aw-a-ay!" bellowed a red-faced farmer from the south corner of the copse. And with a great thunder of hoofs, the hunt was up and "aw-a-ay!"

As Ted was slipping easily along over a breadth of pasture land, a voice gasped at his shoulder: "Oh, I say! isn't this gorgeous?" With her hat well over her left ear and a long strand of hair streaming on the breeze, Miss MacIntyre ranged up alongside. Her face was crimson, her reins flapped loosely on the delighted Turpin's neck.

"What the— What are you doing here? Where's Honeybun?"

"Too fat—his horse, too!" she screamed as she was borne past him.

With anguish unspeakable the young man watched her wild flight. "She'll override the hounds, as sure as eggs is eggs! There—I knew it! Oh, my gum!"

"The master was rather rude," Miss MacIntyre subsequently confided to Mrs. Alton, "but I didn't mind—much. Of course, it was only natural that he should want to keep all the cream of it to himself."

Not, however, the remarks of that sorely-trying gentleman, but a little misadventure at a line of post and rails, put a safe distance between the threatened pack and their too-ardent follower. She had, of course, not the faintest idea of slowing down as she approached the take-off, neither had her overjoyed steed. The result was the fair old purler which had been confidently expected by all beholders!

Miss MacIntyre lay for a moment gazing dazedly up into the grey vault of heaven—then she scrambled to her feet. "Catch my horse! Catch my horse, I tell you!" she shouted imperiously to the outraged Ted, whose real anxiety on her behalf now gave way to intense exasperation at seeing his day ruined by this mad-woman.

And as, somewhat sobered by his contact with mother earth, Dick Turpin allowed himself to be captured: "Put me up! Put me up, I say!" she shrieked, fairly dancing with impatience.

"Not unless you promise to go through that gateway into the high road and straight home"—the young man eyed her determinedly.

"Yes, yes, all right—anything you like. Only put me up!" But once in the saddle the shameless young woman threw all honour to the winds, and, bringing down her crop with a great whack on the surprised Turpin's quarters, was once more "aw-a-ay".

"Did you ever see anything like that girl's riding?" a *habitué* of the hunt said to Ted, as with reins and hair alike wildly flying, Peggy crashed through a great straggling hedge. "If she gets through this run without a broken neck it's more than she deserves. Why, she doesn't know the very elements of the game!"

Now, it was rather odd that, freely as Ted himself condemned Miss MacIntyre's performance, he experienced a distinct feeling of resentment at hearing it criticised by any other person. So: "All the same, she knows more than the elements of some other games. She can grass her salmon and bring down her stag with the best. Give you and me points at those jobs, my boy!"

"Oh—ah! Sorry—didn't know she was a friend of yours." His friend glanced at him curiously.

Truly it was a great and glorious hunt. A straight-necked fox and a burning scent over the cream of the Blankshire country! But the pace throughout was killing, and when, taking a sudden left-hand turn, hounds began to breast the steep ascent to Greenhill Common, the field tailed out into a long line; heavy-weights fell to the rear. Still Dick Turpin—a lathering, sobbing Dick Turpin now—scrambled and stumbled upward, at the tail of hounds. Peggy twisted her fingers in his mane and bent far over his outstretched neck, her whole soul concentrated in the effort to get forward—forward! At last the crest of the rise. And from the far side of the big quickset hedge which rose directly from the edge of the upland plateau there suddenly came a terrific chorus of hound-voices. The cry of blood! Dick Turpin recognised it, if his rider did not. His ears pricked forward; he rushed madly at the obstacle, alike unwitting and unheeding of the yawning ditch beyond!

"There, she's coming to . . ." vaguely the words floated through Peggy's numbed brain, and she opened her misty eyes to see Ted's chalk-white face close to her own.

"What—what—what—Where are the hounds?" With a mighty effort she stumbled to her feet.

The Master, whom Peggy now recognised, standing by Ted's elbow, heaved a great sigh of relief. "Jove! You've given us a nice fright, young lady! There, there, all's well that ends well." He turned to the huntsman, who stood near, brush dangling from his hand; "I'm not sure that such a reckless young person deserves it, but still—" he nodded to the man.

The colour rushed into Peggy's pale cheeks. "Oh! Oh! Oh!" she panted, rapturously. But it was her left hand which she extended for the coveted trophy—her right dangled helplessly by her side. "The day of my life!" she gasped, then tumbled in an inert heap at the huntsman's feet.

Long before the broken arm was again fit for service, Peggy was recalled by her irate parents to her Highland home.

"Ah, nevermore shall I have such a glorious time!" she sighed, as again and again she lived over those crowded hours of joyous life. Therein, however, she erred, for in the days to come the Blankshire Hunt knew her well. But not as Peggy MacIntyre. That slender figure which more than once "showed 'em all the way" belonged to Mrs. Ted Alton. And thus it came to pass that *Miss MacIntyre's* first meet was also her last!

## AN EYE FOR A COUNTRY.

OF some men who ride to hounds successfully we often hear it said they have an "eye for a country." What do we mean by this? We see the results of this gift in the easy, smooth way in which certain men seem to get to hounds. The late Lord Suffolk has told us how the Lord Wilton of his day used to be always with hounds, no matter how fast or how far they ran; yet he never seemed to be in a hurry or go out of a canter. Lord Wilton himself is said to have exclaimed, "Where *do* they find these terrible places? I never see them." An eye for a country enables us to reach hounds quickly and quietly when they are running, and to stay with them when we are there. An eye for a country certainly enables one to reach a given point quickly and easily; but, as a matter of fact, the results of an eye for a country in riding to hounds are not to be obtained without several contributory gifts and qualities. First, we must have the horse. There is a great deal of nonsense written about seeing sport on cheap or inferior horses. You can do a great deal if you must, no doubt. Necessity is an excellent riding-master; but I have never read or known of any man who could ride season after season and keep his nerve who did not possess good horses. Lord Wilton, Mr. Assheton Smith, Mr. George Payne, Dick Christian, Tom Firr, the late Mr. Hugh Owen and Lord Annaly all had, or made, the opportunity of riding first-rate horses. The horses might not always be finished hunters, but they were bold, with high courage and good shoulders. Many of these great riders to hounds of the past never rode an unfinished horse, and Mr. Assheton Smith was known to send a horse home half-a-dozen times before he could ride him to his satisfaction. To use his gift, the man with an eye for a country must have the right tools—horses with manners, courage and some pace, and the skill to handle the tools, the quiet, firm seat, the light hand and, above all, the power of rapid decision. More hunts are lost by hesitation at the critical moment than by any other fault of judgment or horsemanship.

An eye for a country is acquired and improved by close observation of small details in riding to hounds; but it must not be confounded with a knowledge of a country, close, intimate and particular, such as is possessed by some members of every Hunt. This knowledge of a country is a fatal gift,

and only enables the possessor to lead others astray. Useful for second horsemen, who need not, and perhaps ought not to, see much of a hunt, it leads the experienced sportsman and his luckless followers into difficulties, and causes the loss of many a good hunt. The real value of an eye for a country is to enable you to ride to hounds effectively and as close as custom and conscience will permit; not to give opportunities to skirt or to cut off corners. An eye for a country is therefore not a knowledge of gaps, gates and bridle-paths, combined with a firm conviction that you know better than hounds, huntsman and sometimes even than the fox himself where the chase is leading. A knowledge of the country always leads us wrong; an eye for a country enables us to do what is right. We must also have a knowledge not so much of what the hounds are doing as of what they are likely to do. The first thing we have to attend to is to secure a start. There was a very well known pack with which I hunted at one time. There generally was by the covert-side a person in authority who held up the field at some convenient gate in order to give the hounds and huntsman room. A start was thus, as it always must be, something of a lottery. The plan that a friend of mine adopted was to choose a place in the fence in which the gate was, and the moment the signal was given to wheel round and jump it. Thus, he was often a field away before the rest were through the gate. He seldom hesitated to jump a stiff rail or a hog-backed stile, knowing that in the first excitement of a start, with the music of the hounds in his ears, a good horse will fling himself high and far into the next field, and thus secure a start. But the man with an eye to hounds notes that the pack, after the wavering and hesitation which so often occur before hounds settle to run, are swinging from right to left across his front. In the corner of the field to the left is a gate, and for that he races without hesitation, swings it open deftly, and pulls up in time to see the hounds fly the fence at the side of the field. A sharp turn, a scramble through the fence where there is a tree and consequently a weak place, places the horseman in the same field with hounds. They drive across the middle of the pasture, and he slips up under the hedge because the going is sounder there and his eye is used to save his horse. There is a scent, and the foxes from





"ON TO THE ROAD OVER THE TIMBER NEAR THE TREE." THERE IS A GOOD TAKE OFF OPPOSITE FOR THE JUMP OUT.

that covert have the reputation for being bold and straight-necked. There is now a choice of courses before him. He may go straight forward and take the strong stake and bound fence which previous experience tells him is very likely to have a wide ditch on the far side; or he may, with some others, diverge for an invitingly weak place which, when the heavy-weight who is now riding towards it has crossed, will probably develop into an obvious gap; or he may go for a well-hung white gate at the bottom corner of the field. To the man who means to be with hounds, gaps and gates are not to be despised, but are only useful when he can be among the very first to reach them. Now, with a good horse galloping on sound ground at the beginning of the run, it is better economy of horseflesh to go straight and to keep one's place. The horse takes off and with a rocketing bound lands well in the next field. Hounds are now some two hundred yards to the right, and his eye tells him that they have overrun the line. At once he takes a pull and watches to see what will happen. With a wide sweep that makes him glad that he gave them plenty of room, hounds cast themselves, and in response to a cheer from the huntsman, race away from him. He has now the worst of the turn; they are running down into a marshy, boggy lowland, and the horse is pulled together and goes collectedly straight down the steep descent. The fox has cleverly threaded a small covert at the bottom. As the rider reaches the bottom of the slope he lets the horse out, slips over the bank into the covert, up a narrow path, just as to the left the hounds burst into a chorus and drive through. He is out on the far side almost as soon as they are, but they are running hard up a

steep incline. He goes up slowly for the sake of the horse. The incline steadies the hounds, but still they have nothing to carry, and the last hound disappears over the sky-line before he is halfway up. Never mind; he has the map of the country in his mind. There is, on the far side of the hill, a gorse covert, and there the fox is sure to hang for a few moments, and without blowing his horse our friend is on terms with the pack again. The gorse clothes the slopes of the hillside, and there, stretching out before him, is a wide, deep, grass vale, strongly fenced and intersected by a brook. Already the hounds are pressing the fox out of the covert. The cap of the whipper-in is held up at the bottom. With a touch of the horn the huntsman gets his pack together and, holding them on to the gateway where the whipper-in stands, they hit off the line in the green roadway beyond and race up it. Now the next fence is what Dick Christian called a "stitcher"—high, black, impenetrable and forbidding. The man with an eye for a country sees just one place where it can be done with a bold horse. He knows that he can trust his. So he sits back and, sending the horse just a shade faster at the chosen place, trusts to weight and speed to carry him through. Nor is he deceived on this point. The horse jumps high and far, and clears with a rattle the unseen rail on the far side. With a slight peck the horse's fine shoulders enable him to recover himself, and, in addition to this, the rider has left his horse's head alone. No boldness in the horse nor courage in the man would save a fall if the horse had not at that critical moment had his head free.

All is well that ends well, but our friend takes a pull and steadies the horse. Such a fence takes a lot out of a horse,



H. Barrett.

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"WITH A WIDE SWEEP THAT MAKES HIM GLAD HE GAVE THEM PLENTY OF ROOM, HOUNDS CAST THEMSELVES."

and he may, with advantage, be steadied; besides, the hounds are turning a little on his left and he rides on the inside of the turn. An easy place under a tree helps him more, and a smooth, firm pasture enables him to gallop freely. At the bottom of the field there is a "goyle," a terrible obstacle it is, consisting of a ravine, the steep sides clad with undergrowth and just one narrow, steep path made by cattle; at the bottom is a rapid, muddy brook, not very wide but with rotten banks. For this path he races, knowing full well that when several horses and men have slithered down, scrambled through the

and once more steadies his horse; these struggles take a great deal out of a horse. And so the run goes on. In one fence he sees the dread warning of wire, and gallops down for the haystacks in the corner; where there are haystacks there is often a way out. The same idea occurs to the huntsman, and they drop into a ditch, cut a wire strand, and scramble out into an accommodation road. Luckily, the fox has run down this and turns away in the country once more when the hateful wire-enclosed farm is past. Now, for a time, all is smooth going, down easy slopes, across soft and fairly sound grass fields;



H. Barrett.

RIDGE AND FURROW TO THE RIGHT, A COUNTRY FOR A FAST AND BOLD HORSE.

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brook and clambered the steep little track, slippery and like the side of a house, the place will be dangerous and perhaps impassable. I have seen a whole field held up at such a place because a man and horse have slipped up and so blocked the crossing. But our friend reaches it almost at the same time as the huntsman and, pulling back to let him go first—the hounds are already well ahead—he slides down after the huntsman and scrambles up the steep slippery ascent, thankful that he is not too proud to have a breastplate on his horse. It is with the greatest relief that he reaches the top in safety

and then, in the distance, the eye of the sportsman sees the line of willows of the brook. He knows that the secret of brook-jumping is neither pace nor flurry, but a steady hand, an even stride and, above all, to choose a firm place whence to take off. Back into his mind flashes the verses, as sound in counsel as they are stirring in lilt and swing:

Then steady, my young one. The place I've selected,  
Above the dwarf willow, is sound, I'll be bail.  
With your muscular quarters beneath you collected,  
Prepare for a rush like the limited mail.





H. Barrett.

"HE GOES UP SLOWLY FOR THE SAKE OF HIS HORSE."

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It is all there—the steady hand, the eye for the right place, and the courage and condition (note the "muscular quarters") of the horse. The man cool, the horse collected—that pair might be guaranteed to make light of the Whissendine or the

brilliant scurry develops into the historic hunt, and the capability of seeing quickly an opportunity and acting promptly. No wonder the great Duke of Wellington thought much of the hunting-field as a training for the soldier. There is,



H. Barrett.

THE LEADERS ON THE RIGHT HAVE THE BEST OF THE TURN, WHICH THEY HAVE DESERVED.

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even less inviting Smite. How many qualities go to make up an eye for a country? A knowledge of hounds and their work, a cool head, to know when to hasten at the beginning of a run and when to steady the horse as the

and can be, nothing like the school of the hunting-field for the horse soldier. The man who has an eye for a country is already half-way to being a cavalry leader. There is some natural gift, but more, I think, depends on that power of



H. Barrett.

"NOW, FOR A TIME, ALL IS SMOOTH GOING."

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observation and concentration on the business in hand, so valuable but so rare. The man who pays attention to every sign and detail of fox-hunting has registered on the tablets of his memory innumerable valuable fragments of knowledge.

We can acquire an eye for a country by continually taking pains, for, after all, what seem to be inspirations are only memories engraved by the concentration of the mind on the occupation of the moment.

## REFUSING: ITS CAUSE AND CURE.

THE hunter that refuses his fences is an example of a not uncommon form of vice. Refusing is not always an incurable fault, and as the horses that refuse on the hunting field are often more than useful in other respects, it is generally worth while to attempt to cure them. The majority of men who, when buying horses for the chase have to consider ways and means, have found themselves, either by design or accident, in possession of a horse which refuses his fences. Some horses refuse, when in the mood to do so, any kind of jump, others

Taking the horse by the head you wheel him round, touch him with the spurs and close your legs as he comes up to the fence. Not a bit of it this time; he sticks his forefeet out and pulls up dead. Back we go again, and drive him at it hard about a length away from the fence, hitting him over the left shoulder with the whip. Into the hurdle he goes, and crashes through it, and you go on at the tail of the hunt you were leading but a short time ago.

Very often a horse of this sort will go on quite well after a struggle of this sort, and will slip through a gap, jump a rail and



THE SHEEP HURDLE.

have a dislike to a particular kind of obstacle. Everyone is familiar with the horse that will have nothing to do with water. I have known one first-rate timber jumper that would stop at a stone wall. Few refusers are always equally troublesome. Many have their days when they go fairly well, and others when they will not go at all. There is nothing more exasperating than the intermittent refuser. You have a fair start, hounds are running well, the horse has jumped the first fence, a small one with a ditch on the far side, smoothly and well; nor does he hesitate as he spreads himself over a bigger place out of the next field. The pack hover for a moment, cast themselves right round, hit off the line under the hedge and run hard under the fence. The field is divided about halfway down by a line of sheep hurdles, and you watch the hounds top them, carrying a good head as they feel the scent on the grass. The hurdle would not stop a donkey, and the horses right and left of you take it in their stride. Then round swerves your horse so suddenly that he almost shoots you over the fence. At the pace the hunt is going you drop behind.

stride over a hedge quite pleasantly until a check puts us once more on terms with hounds. Just as we reach the pack the huntsman has hit off the line where the fox has crossed a road, and lifting them over this they begin to run in a field on the other side. A gate lets us into the roadway, and a scramble over a bank takes us into the field, and you set the horse going again as we reach the grass and hounds run fast again. You lift your eyes and see the trees on the brow of the hill, where there is a fox covert, partly gorse and partly plantation. For this the fox is making, and you wish to go there as quickly as hounds. The earths are probably stopped, and hounds may not linger. All goes well for a field or two. There are gates, and you wisely make use of the horse's turn of speed to reach these with the least possible delay. Fortune favours you, and hounds incline in your direction, and once more you are as near the pack as you have any right to be. But out of this field there is no gate, unless, indeed, you make a round that would lose you your place to a certainty. Besides, the fence is a very ordinary one, a ditch towards you this time, a low bank and a not





THE STICKY JUMPER.

very strong hedge on the top of it. Perhaps if you galloped on in a matter of fact way, as if you did not care very much whether your horse jumped or did not, he might take it, but remembering your late trouble, you sit right down in the middle of the saddle, take the reins firmly in both hands and quicken your pace. The horse accepts the challenge, you see his ears go back, the muscles of his neck harden, his stride shortens. He cannot altogether stop and come round as he wants to do, and he props, scotches and with a desperate effort gets half round on the edge of the ditch, into which he slips, depositing you on the bank. The horse is not very anxious to get out, and it takes some minutes to make him scramble out. You remount, and, forcing him through a gap made by one of the Hunt, you trot up to the covert aforesaid. Not a sign of hounds, not a sound. You learn afterwards that the fox tried the earths, and then, with hounds at his brush, ran to ground in a covert in the neighbouring country four miles away. You go home hating the horse and yourself, and thinking that hunting is an overrated sport. That is one kind of refuser, and perhaps the worst. At all events, with the horse that will not jump anything we know where we are. The horse that does not like water or stone walls or a ditch towards him is also an easy problem. We can accept his disabilities and ride him accordingly. There is another form of refusal that is, perhaps, the most exasperating of all and is the most difficult to cure. This is the horse that half refuses. He does not want to jump, yet is half afraid to refuse. You feel him hanging back,

shortening his stride and then making a half-hearted spring which may result in a fall, and will certainly end in an undignified scramble. Supposing that we have a horse that refuses, and we ask ourselves what, if any, is the cure for a fault which destroys our pleasure and lessens the value of the horse. The first thing to do is to consider why a horse refuses. This vice has, in fact, several causes. A horse may take to refusing his fences because he has a sulky temper, either inherited (certain lines of blood have a tendency to bad temper) or caused by injudicious treatment. This is the most difficult case to deal with, and is often incurable. Or the trick of refusing may be the result of a cowardly temper.



GETS HALF ROUND TO THE EDGE OF THE DITCH, INTO WHICH HE SLIPS.

The courage of some horses fails them, like that of their riders, when they come to a big place. Some horses are bolder than others, but most horses would jump anything within their powers if their courage had not been undermined by a timid rider or an overbold one. There are men who never can believe that a four year old out of condition cannot do what an older horse would achieve with ease. They believe in giving a horse a fall, a plan which with some bold, high-couraged horses may not do a great deal of harm, but is never likely to do much good, and may destroy a horse's confidence in his rider and himself for ever. Another cause of refusing is simply that landing gives the horse pain, and many old horses are unwilling to jump when the ground is hard.

Lastly, the horse learns to refuse as the result of bad riding. The kind of rider who teaches a horse to refuse is what Whyte Melville calls the hard funkier—the man who wishes to ride hard, and does so sometimes, but whose courage fails him from time to time. He stops a perfectly willing horse once or twice and the mischief is done. Many hunters become very sulky if continually disappointed, and very often display it by turning round or refusing at their fences. Another way in which the habit of refusing is set up is when a not very bold horse and a rider whose nerve is not of the best come together. As long as everything goes smoothly the pair get on well together, and the fences are crossed easily as they come. Then a horse in front refuses, the one behind follows suit and the rider, put off by the refusal, slips off to a gate, with the result that the horse does the same thing next time and becomes an occasional, if not an habitual refuser. But however refusing is brought about, the result is the same—it spoils our sport and our tempers and reduces the value of the horse. If by accident or necessity we have become possessed of a refuser, how are we to deal with him? If it is not a very bad case, we can often bring about a cure simply by straightforward and resolute riding. A friend of mine, who was rather successful in dealing with refusers, adopted the following plan. His theory was that, above all things, you should avoid a battle and endeavour to establish the horse's confidence in himself and you. A horse can, and does sometimes, win a battle. I saw one succeed the other day with a very patient, strong and resolute rough rider. The horse, a big, powerful, well-bred bay, was one of those animals who had bad days. Once we determined to try a little gentle schooling round an artificial course. The horse not only made up its mind that it would not jump, but that it would not stay in the field with the jumps, and three times he literally forced his way out and fairly defeated his rider.

I think my friend is right; a battle is, above all things, to be avoided. The horse is stronger than the rider, and has, moreover, a most retentive memory, so that he does not soon forget. But to return. The plan my friend adopted was, as soon as he and the refusing horse were on fairly good terms, to ride him out hunting, and bide his time as long as nothing particular happened. The pair went through gates, along the sides of roads, down lanes and bridle paths, keeping in touch with, but taking no prominent part in,

the hunt. Then one day there would be a scent. Hounds would fling out of covert, drop their sterns and scurry away. Then my friend would sit down and drive the refuser straight ahead, taking a line parallel to, but fairly wide of, hounds, since he did not wish to check the horse in order not to override the pack. Ten minutes of this, taking the fences as they came, with the horse's blood up, sufficed often to effect a cure. The next time the horse went with hounds he remembered the game of romps, and was eager for a renewal. When the horse was not vicious, but only nervous from bad riding, or headstrong from weak handling, a few weeks of this generally sufficed. There are two points about this treatment of refusers which I should note as being important. The horse must be in good condition, and should be above himself. If a refuser is under the mark or is tired, his propensities often awake. Of course, the great point is that he should have no excuse to refuse, and should come in time to forget the tricks he once played. While on the subject of condition, I may say that, in breaking and schooling a

young horse, great pains should be taken to bring him into condition. Want of condition and overwork are two frequent causes of vices of temper. A horse has not only to be physically capable of a certain amount of exertion, but he must feel as if it would be a joy to him to gallop and jump. Just as over-exertion destroys a man's nerve in the hunting-field, so does it take down a horse's courage. This plan of riding a refuser right up to hounds, but keeping him quiet till the pack ran hard, is a very good one, and may always be tried. But there are horses which are beyond such simple remedies. Let me tell how I dealt with the worst refuser I ever had. Late one season I wanted a horse. My best had gone into another stable, another was lame and, at all events, I had nothing to ride. One day I saw a local dealer riding a very good-looking chestnut horse which I eventually bought for what was, considering his looks, his pace and his jumping powers, a very small price. I was in a hurry; the horse gave me a charming ride when I tried him. As I went away the dealer said, "He wants a bit of driving at his fences; he's inclined to besticky."

That was a mild way of putting it. The horse stuck resolutely, and I lost three runs in succession. For a time he would go so well as to show me what he could do. I had come home early one day, sick of the continual disappointments, and was regarding my new purchase over the half-door of the box as he worked steadily through his feed—he was a capital "doer"—when I was joined by the head man of a neighbour, a large farmer who bred hunters and sold them at Horncastle with great success. The old man was an excellent horseman as well as being as good as possible with mares and foals. He said (after I had told him my trouble): "That's bad breaking acting on natural bad temper. All —'s (mentioning a well-known stallion) stock can gallop and jump, but you've to handle 'em very tender; they've a pain in their tempers. Now, that there horse was knocked about a bit in breaking, and then he mastered the gentleman as had him." "Well!" I said, "what should you do? I feel inclined to shoot him." "No, sir," he said, "not that. I should



A FIGHT.



take and treat him as if he'd never been broken at all." Over this advice I thought, and determined to act on it. As soon as I could I turned the horse out for a couple of months. I remembered an old polo stud groom telling me that a month or two at grass was a cure for a pulling pony. When I took him up I treated him exactly like an unbroken colt. I found when I got him into the school that he had no notion of the use of the aids—had, in fact, no manners, since he had never been taught any. I drove him about the fields with the long reins, and found he had a good deal to learn about the bit and reins. Then I began to ride him short distances with a thick plain snaffle and his head loose. In 1893 I had been in Italy and seen something of the Italian cavalry system of working horses with a loose rein. It seemed to me that perhaps he had acquired a distaste for jumping by having his mouth pulled about by some heavy-handed horse-breaker or nervous rider. Lastly, I began to teach him to jump, giving myself six weeks for this. For some time he was quietly led or driven with long reins over a bar placed on the ground. Then, by degrees, the bar, carefully swathed in straw bands, was raised step by step, and I was pleased to find he showed no objection to it. Then I dug a narrow ditch, about two feet wide, made the earth into a bank on the far side, and drove him over this both ways. After a time I added a low guard-rail, about six inches at first, and then some thorn bushes at the top of the bank. By the end of three weeks he was taking these small obstacles without any objection. Then I added a hurdle at some distance further on.

The horse was always petted and made much of when he had done his little course backwards and forwards once or twice, and fed immediately afterwards, so that all the associations were as pleasant as possible. Lastly, I got on his back and rode him over the course. By this time we were the best of friends. Then I put my groom on another horse, and we rode round the home farm, just taking the fences as they came, all the work being done with a loose rein and his head free. I found he was a clever horse, and I was careful never to disturb his temper or to provoke a battle. Then I ventured out one cub-hunting morning, with the stable companion as leader. We watched our opportunity and had one or two easy jumps, and went home. The end of the matter was that I had an excellent hunter for very little money, always provided I could get him over the first fence of the run. I do not say that my plan would cure every refuser, for, indeed, I know it would not; but the two principles on which it was based—the restoration of confidence in the horse, and patience in teaching him to jump—this horse had never been taught. The process misnamed breaking which he had gone through was no process, and it is a common enough practice in my own part of the country. This horse was bred on a farm, and when he was rising four, full of grass and in no sort of condition, the farmer, himself no horseman, sent for our local horsebreaker, gave him the colt, allowed him a month and paid him five pounds. The breaker was a good horseman and a bold rider in his way, and he sent his charges along. In some cases they turned out fair hunters, but they lacked often the three "C's" of the hunting stable, which are, indeed, closely connected with each other, *condition, confidence and courage*. If young horses were never overworked there would be far fewer refusers than there are at present.

There is another fault, which we find in Irish horses sometimes; they do not refuse but they are sticky at their jumps. Some horses drop short and throw or buck themselves over. This is unpleasant to the rider, and sometimes disastrous. There was once an Irish horse who, soon after he landed in England, was ridden by a bold young horseman. Presently they came to a locked gate. The rider put the horse straight at it. The horse went up boldly, turned sideways and stopped dead, shooting the rider neatly over and then bucking over after him. The horse had no intention of refusing; that was his way. It is, however, disconcerting to the rider if he is not prepared. I remember having a very narrow escape. The scene was the Bicester country and the performers a young Irish mare and myself. Everyone who knows the Bicester country knows there are some wide ditches, and one of these bounded a covert which hounds were drawing. I went into the covert, the hounds found and went away at once as I reached the boundary. I saw this ditch, full of very dirty water. It was of no great width, and I went at it with a light heart. Instead of the rocketing bound of a fresh horse in the excitement of the beginning of a run, the mare stopped dead (naturally I came on to her neck) and then bucked over. Where I was when she landed I do not know, but certainly not in the saddle. I just saved the voluntary and went on. She never put me down, but she always jumped in that fashion. Some people would say get a cutting whip and drive her along. I do not believe in the whip, especially for young mares. I do not wish to rouse the obstinate element in the temper of an Irish horse, and once more I suggest a careful breaking from the

beginning, and teach them to jump at a fair hunting pace by means of patience, perseverance and practice. Of course, the plan of re-breaking is troublesome, but it is a cure for many vices, and, I believe, if each owner rehearsed a sound system of colt-breaking for each of his hunters at the beginning of each season, we should have far more perfect hunters and far fewer failings and vices to complain of than we have now. D.

## THE EXPENSE OF HUNTING THREE DAYS A WEEK.

I.—IN THE GRASS COUNTRIES.

THE question asked by the Editor of COUNTRY LIFE is a difficult one: The cost of a man's hunting for three days a week in a grass country? It depends on the man. But if an answer must be given, then the choice of three days is a difficulty. It includes Melton. No man in his senses would choose to go to Melton unless he was hunting at least five days a week. There is nothing to do on the other days, as Nimrod pointed out when writing on the same subject a century ago. That, however, is not all. When a man goes to Melton he wishes to share in the cream of Midland sport. That means that in order to have a return for his expenditure he ought to hunt on the following days: With the Quorn on Mondays and Fridays, the Cottesmore on Tuesdays, Thursdays and alternate Saturdays, and the Belvoir on Wednesdays and alternate Saturdays. These days afford the best riding countries in the world, but if you would see the best of the sport you ought to go out nearly every day. There are many poor scenting days and short running foxes even in the Shires. There never will be a great number of really fast, good gallops in any season, and to see your share of them you must go out often.

The three-day-a-week man, then, should leave Melton out of the question and choose either Oakham, Grantham or Market Harborough. In the first case he would hunt with the Cottesmore only; in the second with the Belvoir only; and in the third with Mr. Fernie's and the Pytchley. To see hounds satisfactorily in these countries you require as good a horse as you can afford to buy. If you buy inferior horses you will enjoy more sport elsewhere than here. You require a big horse, a bold horse and a blood one, and these are worth money. The horse must also be fairly well mannered; and a no conditioned horse is out of place in fields which will always be large and in countries where it is necessary that at times you should take your turn at the only practicable place in the fence. It will pay best in the long run to buy seasoned horses with characters. These horses, if known, will nearly always bring back the price you paid for them if you want to sell. Two horses might give you six days in a fortnight in other countries. They will not do so in the grass countries. The pace is greater there on the average than in the Provinces. The Masters hunt longer, and the number of foxes and the small coverts enable us to hunt practically all day. If you are to enjoy the best of the sport you must take out two horses each day, and for three days a week you must have three horses, and should have four if possible. You must also have a man who can ride a second horse. Thus we have a stable of three or four horses, representing an outlay of, say, £200 for each of two and £80 for a good horse with an "if" against him; or we shall have four at, say, a total value of £600, the first stable representing a capital outlay of £480. But if the horses are of the right sort and carefully if boldly ridden, they ought, with ordinary luck, to be worth £400 or £300 respectively, or about two-thirds of what they cost you, if you sell in the spring. Subscriptions should, if you do your duty by the Hunt, come to at least £25 in each case, and it will be more if you hunt with two packs. It is customary to make some acknowledgment of the Hunt servants' services at Christmas, and there are subscriptions to various funds—wire, damage, poultry, Point-to-Point races and Shire horse funds—which will amount to another £10 at least. You may reckon that each horse will eat about 18s. a week, or, say, £100 for the season, if your man is careful. There are various sundries, including the saddler, which will come to about £5. There will be a stable helper at 18s. a week, and the head man's wages must be reckoned for twenty-six weeks, to come to £30 at least. Another £10 for contingencies. Thus we get a gross expenditure of £876, less £400 for value of horses, or, in round figures, £500 for the season from November to March. Nor do I think that you can do it much more reasonably. I think, one year with another, that will represent the outlay. Then, as to housing yourself. By far the best plan is for two or three friends to share a furnished house. One or other is sure to have some gift for house-keeping, and he should be manager and housekeeper; but you must, of course, have a good cook-housekeeper accustomed to hunting-men and their ways, and give such help as one may require. A good soldier-servant is most useful in such "chummeries"; but, if properly managed, such an establishment will not cost more than your ordinary rate of living, possibly not so much if one of the friends is a good manager. Rents run no higher in the Shires than elsewhere. The cheapest plan is to take a house and furnish it, trusting to find a congenial stable-companion for yourself for the season. The rent and taxes for the year will be less than the sum paid for a furnished house for the season. Of course, I have assumed that you mean to ride to hounds seriously. No doubt pottering could be done much more cheaply, but that is not my subject. E. M. P.



**F**EW artists would seem at first sight to be more opposed in sentiments, ideals and methods than Vanbrugh and Adam. It is hard to think of any superficial resemblance closer than the common fate of being misunderstood by the professional and artistic criticism of their own times. In Vanbrugh's case it was reserved for Sir Joshua Reynolds in his famous discourses to place his aims and methods in their true light. Speaking as a painter, he said: "He had originality of invention, he understood light and shadow, and has great skill in composition. To support his principal object he produces his second and third groups of masses." Adam's preface to his "Works" has an equally illuminating passage. "Sir John Vanbrugh's genius was of the first class; and in point of movement, novelty and ingenuity, his works have not been exceeded by anything in modern times. We should certainly have quoted Blenheim and Castle Howard, as great examples of these perfections, in preference to our own or any other modern architect, but, unluckily for the reputation of this excellent artist, his taste kept no pace with his genius and his works are so crowded with barbarisms and absurdities,

and so borne down by their own preposterous weight, that none but the discerning can separate their merits from their defects. In the hands of the ingenious artist, who knows how to polish, and refine, and bring them into use, we have always regarded his productions as rough jewels of inestimable value. We cannot allow ourselves to close this note without doing justice to the memory of a great man whose reputation as an architect has been long carried down the stream by a torrent of undistinguishing prejudice and abuse." It is of the greatest interest therefore to find that this tribute is not merely based on an ordinary acquaintance with Vanbrugh's works, but that the writer had actually been employed in adding to one of the earlier master's buildings. We may well doubt if any evidence short of the production of the drawing, most fortunately preserved at Compton Verney, headed, "Design for an addition to the south front corresponding to the old part of the house as much as possible," and signed "Robert Adam 1760," would be accepted as proof of the actual facts. The drawing, now reproduced, seems to belong to a set in the Soane Museum, where this particular elevation is missing. The total extent of the façade is given as



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THE ADAM PORTICO.

"COUNTRY LIFE."





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THE SOUTH-WEST FRONT.

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one hundred and thirty-five feet four inches, and the dimensions of the main blocks and pavilions agree in the main with the building as it stands. The style of the façade as a whole is quite unlike Adam's work, but it has qualities common to Vanbrugh, notably the round arched windows in both storeys and the bold scale of the design. The evidence seems to imply that two-thirds of this façade already existed as a centre curtain wall with two end pavilions,

and that Adam added a new curtain wall containing three windows and an end pavilion, in the same style, so that the former end pavilion should become the centre of the south façade thus extended. This suggestion is borne out by a plan in the Soane Museum which shows the older house in a lighter tint than the dark alteration work by Adam. The plan in *Vitruvius Britannicus*, Vol. V., has no such indications. If we accept this explanation of the Adam drawing of the south façade the west or garden front reveals itself at once as a Vanbrugh design. It has all the marks of his manner. The great pilasters of his favourite Doric order agree with his scale of handling, and the forcible break of the entablature of the centre is in accordance with his rather crude methods of obtaining a desired effect. It is very unfortunate that his characteristic sash-barring has disappeared in the mania of 1850 for great sheets of plate-glass. The scale is thereby exaggerated and the



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THE BRIDGE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

great windows are made more cavernous than they would otherwise appear.

Adam's addition at Compton Verney may therefore be defined as the prolongation of the north and south wings, the addition of the great portico on the east front, the formation of the hall with the internal treatment of the hall ceiling and of the walls with their characteristic pictures and framework, the building of the orangery, the bridge, and perhaps the design of the

private chapel. The cove of the hall ceiling was redecorated by Gibson, but the central flat with its octagonal coffering is original. Whatever other internal work he may have contributed cannot now be determined, because in 1855 the State rooms were redecorated in a modern semi-Italian style, the architect being John Gibson, a pupil of Sir Charles Barry. If the plan in *Vitruvius Britannicus* can be relied upon, the dining-room had two apsidal ends with screens of columns—Adam's favourite treatment—and it was entered centrally from the hall, which had two fireplaces instead of one in the middle, as at present. The plan now given has been revised to show the original state of things. The great hall was formed by Adam by the removal of a cross wall so as to throw into it the private dining-room of the older house. The original staircase was similarly thrown into the dining-room. The date of the drawings of the hall ceiling

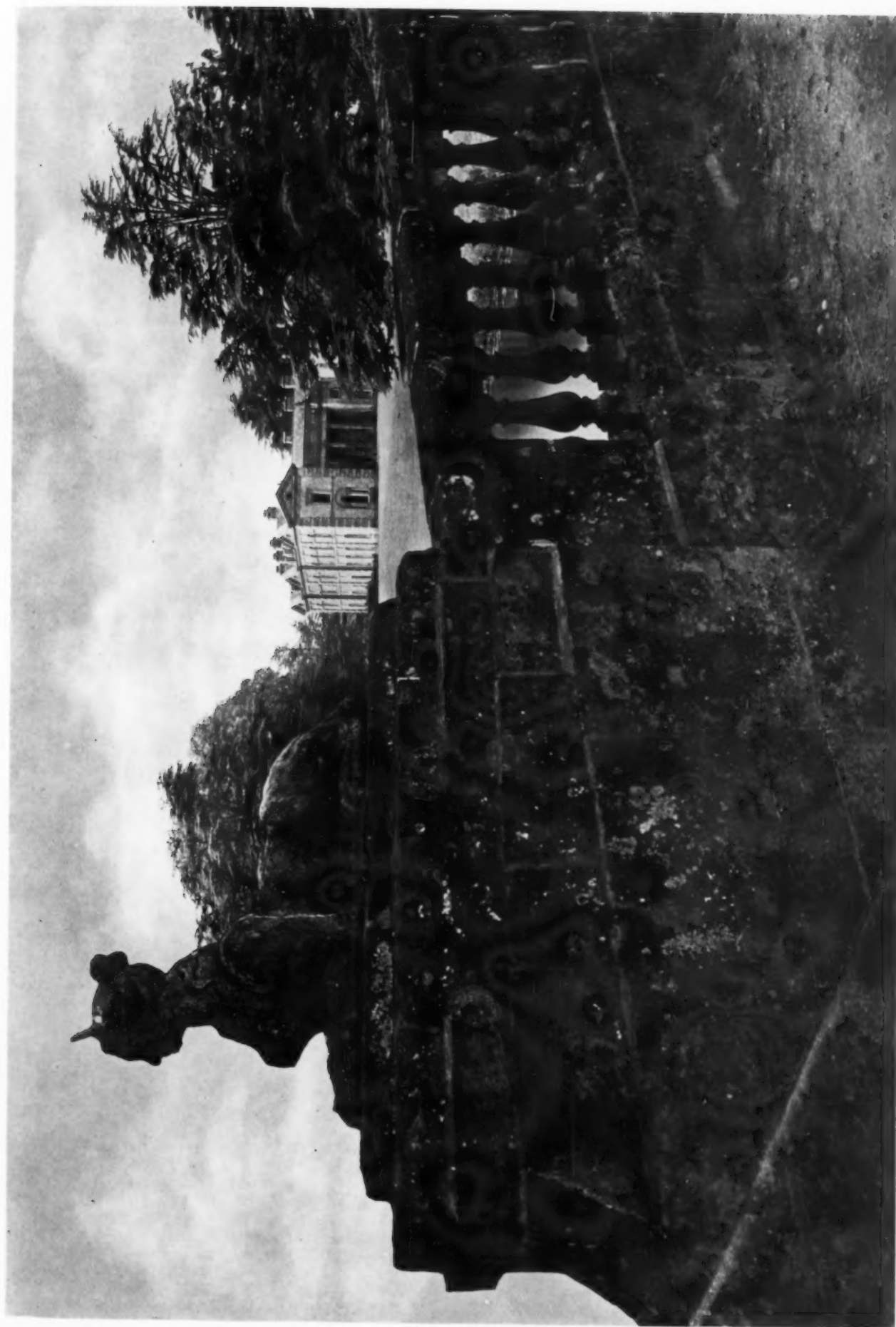


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FROM THE EAST.

"COUNTRY LIFE."





COMPTON VERNEY FROM THE BRIDGE.

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is 1763. There are a large number of wood-carved mantel-pieces, rather French in character of detail, fairly to be considered as versions of Louis XIV., and these may very well be of about Vanbrugh's time. The exterior is said not to have been altered, but it is certain that the great swag frieze under the portico and the large entrance doorway to the hall were inserted by Gibson. They are much heavier in scale and treatment than Adam's own work. Moreover, an elevation published in 1771 shows an upper range of square windows which may have been blanks. The door is shown arched for a fanlight. The lower windows were originally arched until Adam altered them to flat lintels. The centre medallion in the frieze is a freely imagined Saracen's head, the crest of the family, looking more

consisted. The very brief letterpress merely says that the first plate shows "The principal front which has lately been repaired by his Lordship at great expense. Here is a loggia of beautiful Composite columns which, from its situation, has a pleasing effect. The second plate is a plan of the ground floor and offices which are concealed by a plantation." A curious point is that the plan does not coincide with the building. The south wing as built is wider, in a way which tends to confirm the supposition made as to the extent of the Adam addition in relation to the older work.

The staircases are quite unimportant, and the bedrooms, though good, present no special features. The offices have evidently grown by various additions, and the stable block, good in itself, has nothing particularly Adam-like about it, and is probably of an earlier date. It is not unlike the work of Leoni. We have some valuable evidence as to the date of the house, because George Vertue, in his notes of a tour made in October, 1737, describes his visit in company with the Earl of Oxford. He mentions Compton Verney as "a well built house of 1714," and then proceeds to note the pictures, the stained glass windows lying in the hall, and the tombs in the old chapel.

It will be seen that a somewhat complicated account is needed to set out the development of the house, and the story of the family is no simpler. The first Lord Willoughby de Broke won his peerage in 1491, when he took part in the victory of Bosworth, and afterwards served Henry VII. as Marshal of the English Army in the French campaign. He was a great-grandson of the fourth Lord Willoughby de Eresby, a title now merged in the earldom of Ancaster. His son Robert, the second baron, had a son, Edward, who married a daughter of Lord Latimer, but he died before his father, and the barony then fell into abeyance. Elizabeth, the issue of this marriage and *de jure* Baroness Willoughby de Broke, was the greatest heiress then in England, and the ward of Sir Edward Greville of Milcote. This distinguished soldier designed to marry her to John, his heir, but he counted without Elizabeth, who preferred Fulke, the second son. It was put to her that he had no estate to maintain her, and his life was at risk abroad fighting the King's battles. "Shee replied and said that shee had an estate sufficient both



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UNDER THE PORTICO.

"COUNTRY LIFE"

like an early king, or a Roman provincial rendering of a Caesar, than any swarthy denizen of the East. The order of the portico is not unlike that of the Pantheon, but the capitals are of the later Roman type. The two quadrant-shaped lead rain-water pipes in the corners of this façade bear the date 1765, five years later than the date of the Adam drawing of the south front.

When the fifth volume of *Vitruvius Britannicus* appeared in 1771 it contained, besides Shelburne House, only two other buildings by Adam: Witham Hall for Beckford, and Compton Verney for Lord Willoughby de Broke. Of the latter a plan is given and an elevation of the eastern front showing the colonnade. This plan gives no indication at all how much of the house was old and in what the Adam alterations

for him and for herself, and that she would pray for his safeties and wait for his coming," which she did. Their grandson, another Sir Fulke Greville, already *de jure* Lord Willoughby de Broke, was made first Baron Brooke for his services to the throne. Of his gifts as courtier and man of letters, which graced the reigns of Elizabeth and James, it is needless to write here. When he died unmarried his new barony passed by a special remainder to his cousin, the ancestor of the Earl of Warwick. The dormant de Broke barony descended to his sister Margaret, who married Sir Richard Verney of Compton Verney and so changed the family name. One of their grandsons, Sir Richard Verney of Belton, Grantham, M.P. for Warwick, knighted by James II., laid claim to the title



on which *de jure* he was the eleventh holder, and, winning his case before the House of Lords, became *de facto* the third. Dugdale mentions him as a person "happily qualified with most ingenious inclination, from whom he had received much assistance for rectifying the map of the hundred of Kington, as also in the delineation of divers monuments for adorning his work." He lived to the age of ninety, dying in 1711, and was succeeded by his youngest and only surviving son George, twelfth baron,

Press with its great Doric portico at Oxford. This building has features in common with Compton Verney; for instance, the curious semicircle openings in the pediment spandrels.

Vanbrugh's death took place in 1726, at his house in Whitehall. This famous erection, built amid the ruins of Whitehall Palace, burnt in 1697, survived down to our own times, but not unaltered. It is worthy of remark that it also had round



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THE ORANGERY.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

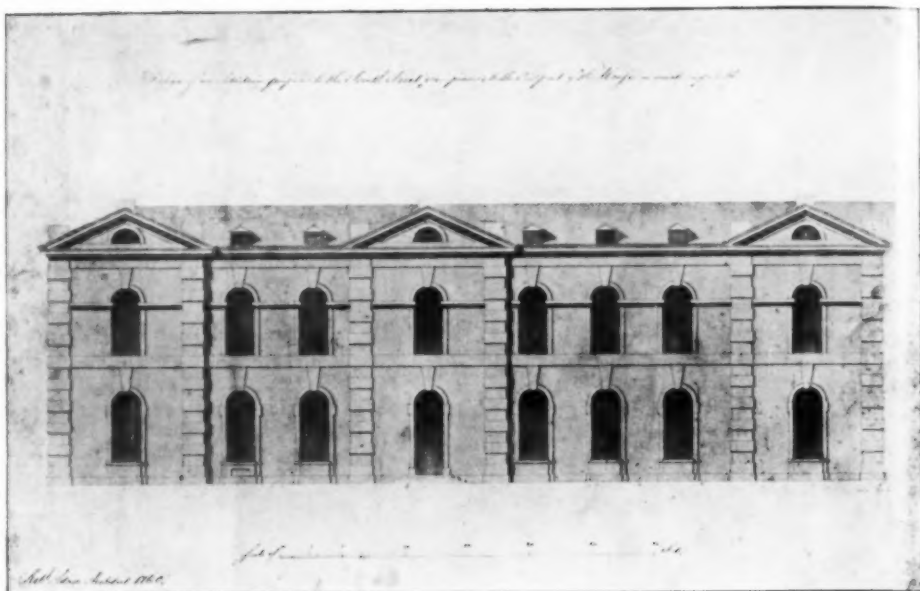
Canon of Windsor, Dean in 1713 and Registrar of the most noble Order of the Garter. To him, therefore, must be due the main building of Compton Verney. Lord Willoughby de Broke says that there is a family tradition that Vanbrugh was the architect of Compton Verney, and its appearance lends weight and sanction to the idea. Vanbrugh started his architectural career with the building of Castle Howard in 1701, and in the summer of 1705 the foundation-stone of Blenheim was laid. In 1711 he was building the Clarendon

arched windows on both floors. Swift's lines will bear quotation:

One asks the Watermen hard by  
Where may the Beets' Palace lie?  
Another of the Thames enquires  
If he has seen its gilded spires,  
At length they in the rubbish spy  
A thing resembling a goose pie.

George, the twelfth Lord Willoughby, lived to December, 1728,

and was succeeded by his elder surviving son, Richard, who died in 1752 without issue. The barony then reverted to his nephew, John Peyto, fourteenth baron, born in 1738. He married in 1761 Lady Louisa North, sister of the celebrated Prime Minister, Lord North. The Adam alterations of 1760 at Compton Verney may therefore very well have been connected with this event. The new ceiling designs are dated 1763. There is a sketch in the Adam collection in the Soane Museum for a monument, with a pencil note ascribing it to Lord Willoughby de Broke. It shows the arms and motto of the family, but there is no date or signature. It seems as if it may have been an idea for a monument to Richard, contemplated but not carried out, as John Peyto lived until 1816. His son, the fifteenth baron, died in 1820, when he was succeeded by his brother, Henry Peyto, who lived until 1852. His death brought a new era of alterations, including the recasting of the state rooms already described.



ORIGINAL ADAM DRAWING PRESERVED AT COMPTON VERNEY.



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THE HALL.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

Compton Verney owes much to its glorious setting. The way from Kineton, with its long stretch of grass-bordered road, lined with tall trees, conveys the idea of a grand avenue of approach. On the right hand a great sheet of water is seen through the fringe of foliage until, at the point where the main road crosses a bridge, a fine clearing affords a noble view of the great stone mansion. The trees in the grounds are quite exceptional, and convey an idea of immense antiquity: giant cedars of Lebanon and huge elms exclude the idea of mushroom plantations. "Capability" Brown was employed to lay out the grounds anew, and succeeded beyond his wont on lines analogous to St. James' Park at its best. It provides no immediate setting for the house, which just finds itself on its lawns as best it can. The winding sheet of water, the natural elevation of the site and the beautiful trees were, however, elements which would ensure success in any event. The actual approach to the house is over a stone bridge of three segment arches of an Adam type. The balustrade is worked to a graceful curve and terminates with four sphinxes, extremely well rendered in lead. They are the same type as those that adorn the Adam gateway screen at Syon. The wing walls of the bridge are curved into the steep banks with unusual skill. Beyond the





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IN THE CHAPEL.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

bridge and by the side of the lake is the site of the original chapel, which was removed in 1772.

Its place is marked by an engraved stone slab of that time, which seems to date the new chapel as probably ready for use in that year. There would be no reason to suppose that it was not by Adam, if Neale and Rep. on had not, on the authority of Holland, included it in a list of "Capability" Brown's works. As, however, Adam was still in full practice, and in 1771 was publishing the designs of Compton Verney, it seems more than likely that Brown merely carried out a design by Adam. The west front is a very successful piece of unadorned architecture. A simple arcaded and rusticated base, agreeing with the height of the internal western gallery, and a plain steep pedimented upper storey in ashlar work, constitute the entire façade. Three quietly treated blank windows, or recesses, are the leading features of the principal stage.

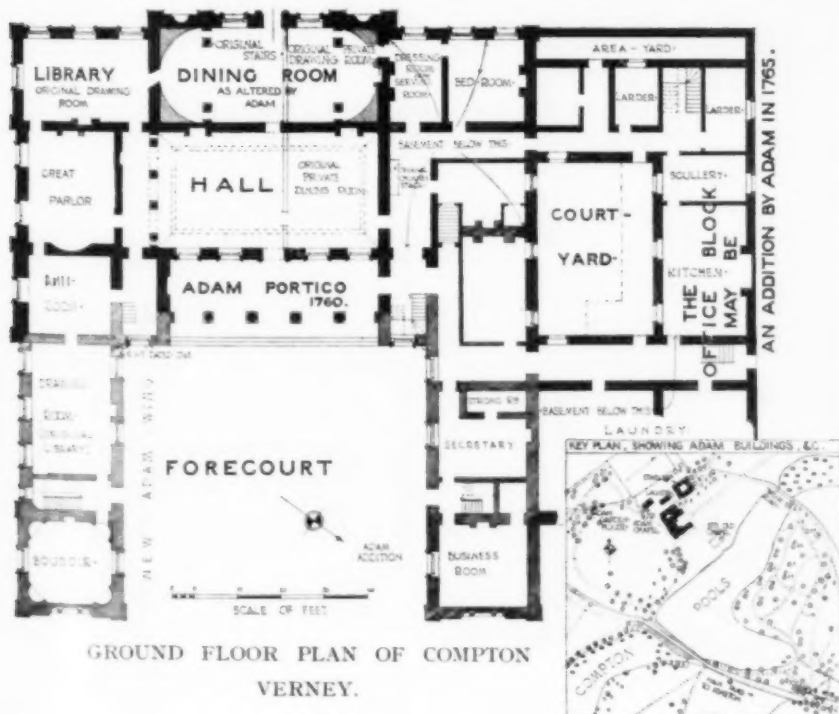
Internally, the flat panelled ceiling rests on a simple cove, intersected in relation



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THE STABLES.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



to the round arched side windows and to the larger Venetian opening of the eastern end. In the side windows the deep splayed jambs are panelled with rosette centres, forming a very effective piece of plaster-work.

The western gallery rests on coupled columns of a simple Doric type which carry a plain frieze architrave adorned with graceful swags. The western wall is panelled at the back, and there are two quadrant fans to the angles of the centre panel, and an unmistakable Adam mantel-piece for the comfort of the gallery occupants.

There is nothing to show what the reredos was like, but the plain deal and oak-grained pews and pulpit are all probably original. There are two tombs of exceptional interest, the altar tomb by Nicholas Stone the elder, who noted in his Diary: "In 1630 I made a tomb for Sir Richard Varney and his Lady set up at Compton Verney for the which he had paid me £90." The other is a black and white marble wall tomb of Sir Greville Verney, Knight, 1668, with a portrait bust. The interesting Munich glass in the chapel was obtained abroad about 1660, fitted to the windows of the old chapel, and

then readapted to those of the new. On a book in one of the pieces is the date 1602.

It only remains to refer to the orangery, which, though small in scale, bears full evidence of Adam's refined design. It has five arches and four Doric columns, with a finely wrought entablature and a pediment over. Along the base-line are placed four stone sphinxes of an interesting type. Their appearance suggests that they have been the terminals of some gate piers or other feature, of which remembrance has been lost.

The story of Compton Verney is long and intricate. The development during two centuries of the house we see to-day has been a text in itself; but there was the older house with which Dugdale deals, standing on the margin of the existing water. We may be sure that the Verney who married Margaret, the sister of Sir Fulke Greville, first Baron Brooke, would have beautified the home to which he took so distinguished a bride. Long before that we may imagine human occupation back to the days of the great Roman road which brought law and order into the heart of Britain. Compton Verney could never have been a trackless retreat like its neighbour Compton Winyates, and each in the contrast of its architecture seems true to its locale.

ARTHUR T. BOLTON.

## THE FOX AND HIS CUNNING.



"THERE WAS THE FOX QUIETLY SWIMMING BACK AGAIN, HAVING DOUBLED ON HIS TRACKS."

THE fox in proverb and fable represents the type of animal cunning, and is often depicted as possessing cleverness beyond the range of any animal. Yet in plain truth, many hunting men maintain it is the limit of the fox's intelligence which makes him give us such good sport, and some even assert that his boasted cunning is purely fabulous. That there may be some truth in this I am not prepared to gainsay, especially as, in thinking over some past season's hunting, I personally can only vouch for less than half-a-dozen instances of cunning displayed by the hunted animal. The natural instinct of a very shy animal will lead the fox to display a certain amount of cunning; but this amounts chiefly to an avoidance of being seen rather than a deliberate display of tactics to escape being killed. For example, anyone who has kept a tame fox knows that the creature, when taken for a walk on chain, always displays great anxiety to keep close to the hedge, and to run in the ditch alongside the road—an interesting trait, which is at the same time very annoying to the



TAKING A REST (HAVING FOUND A SUBSTITUTE).

person leading! The most common example of the fox's cunning is the extraordinary way it contrives to slip across a ride or road without being seen. How very often, at the exact moment when your attention is elsewhere, or you momentarily turn your back, does a fox slip across unseen! Personally you are convinced that no fox has crossed, yet hounds flash over in full cry a moment later, proving you wrong in nine cases out of ten. Now this, I am convinced, is no matter of chance. The fox has watched his opportunity.

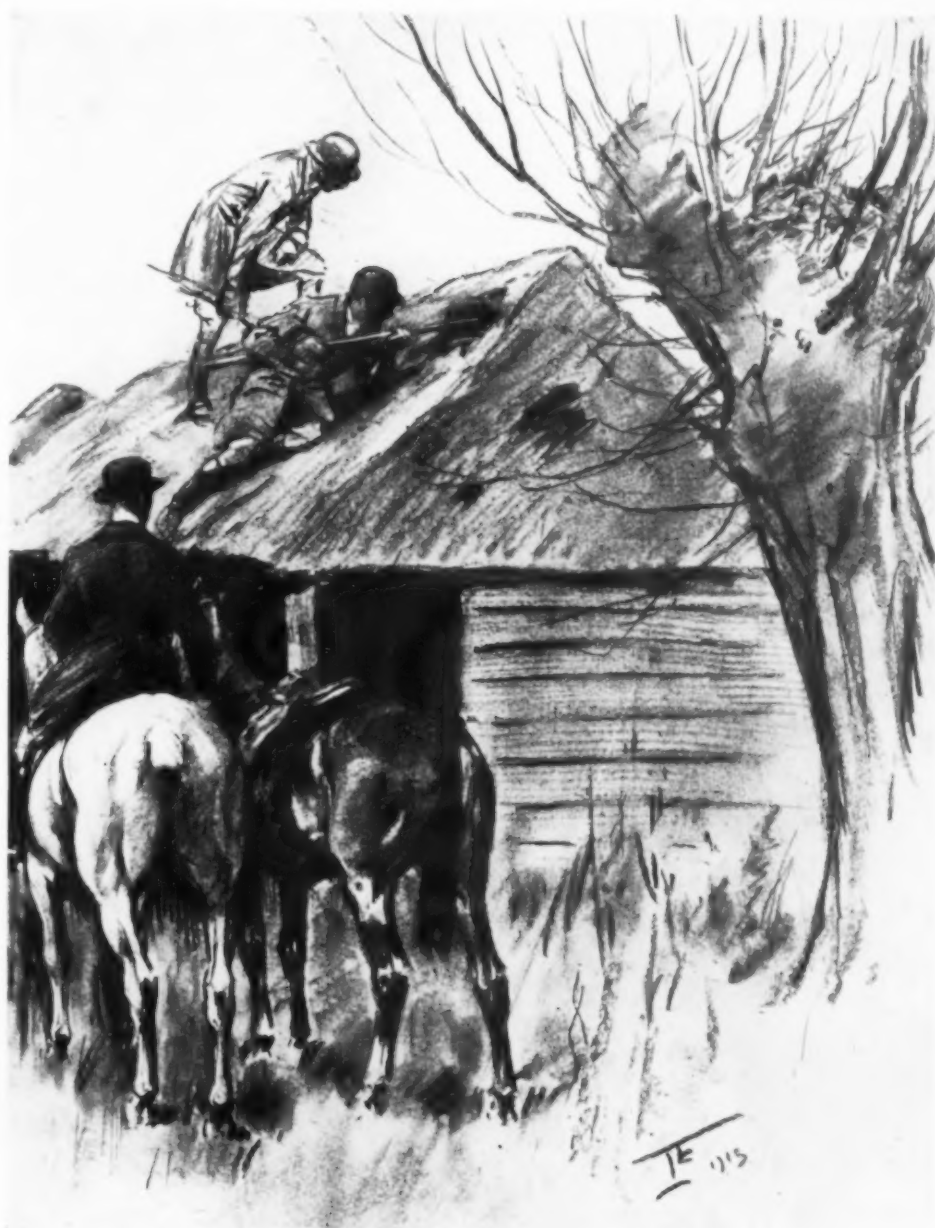
I remember some years ago (with the Old Berks) there was a fox who inhabited an old thatched cattle-shed, out of which we used to turn him by inserting a rake into the thatched roof. After being run twice and each time escaping, the thatch was found blank for a considerable period. From time to time, when passing, the place was tried without result, and the opinion was expressed that our fox had met his death by some illegitimate means or else had changed his domicile for good. But it was not so, and his cunning was proved in a curious way. After some little lapse of time, hounds were passing the old shed again. Once more the thatched roof was tried, and once more there was no result. By mere chance, however, a spectator chucked a stone into an old tree alongside the shed, and down jumped our old fox! Many a time he must have lain up there and watched us trying his old hiding-place. Curiously enough, on this occasion the fox got killed. It was thought, if I remember rightly, that the stone had hit him, for he was overtaken directly, after running in an erratic manner.

Again, there was a certain isolated covert out on the flats, in the middle of some ploughed land, which over and over again was drawn blank. The farmer maintained there was a fox there (the usual tale of "poultry" was told), and the men at work with their teams said they often saw a fox coming and going from this covert, yet he never was at home when hounds came to pay him a visit. One day, however, an old farmer (who ought to have known better), in taking a cut across his neighbour's wheat, just after we had drawn the covert blank, came across the fox lying out in the middle of the field, a hundred yards or so from the covert.

My theory is that this fox, on hearing the "first far-away echoes" of the hunt trotting on the road and steadily approaching his haunts, used to steal from the wood and lie out in the open while the covert was drawn, slipping back again when hounds had gone. There is a similar case on record of this, but the fox then was discovered because he got up out of his hiding-place in the open field too soon, having neglected the chance of anyone remaining behind after hounds had gone. He was viewed by a whip, who for some reason had been delayed and left behind. A holloa brought back the hounds, and he was hunted and killed.



JUST AFTER WE'D DRAWN THE COVERT BLANK HE CAME ACROSS THE FOX LYING OUT IN THE MIDDLE OF THE FIELD.



MANY A TIME HE MUST HAVE LAIN UP THERE AND WATCHED US TRYING HIS OLD HIDING PLACE.





"IN TRUE MIDLAND STYLE WERE CAST ON AND ON."

Perhaps the smartest thing I ever saw done by a fox was with the Pytchley. I was watching hounds on foot, and witnessed the following incident. A fox, round (if I remember rightly) in the Hemplow, went away over Crick Canal (by a bridge). Standing on the bank of the canal, I saw the "gone away." Hounds and horsemen went away "full cry" and very fast, but long before the last of the crowd of horsemen was across the bridge, a ripple in the still waters of the canal caught my eye. There was the fox quietly swimming back again, having doubled on his tracks! Hounds flashed on, and in true Midland style were cast on and on. In due course they picked up *another fox*. The hunt

went on their way rejoicing in one direction, while their original fox (also rejoicing, I should imagine) continued in the other.

The fox, though, in my opinion, he in no way displays as much or such various cunning as either the stag or hare, also uses one of the favourite devices of the latter, namely, a substitute. This has been often witnessed, and although I have never actually seen the exchange, I have twice seen a fox, which had evidently been run, sitting up and looking back at hounds running, evidently knowing that his trick had worked and that as his neighbour was now being hunted in his place, he could with safety take a short rest.



WHAT THE EYE DOES NOT SEE THE HEART DOES NOT GRIEVE OVER.

In conclusion, it may be remarked that it is comparatively seldom that a really old fox is killed. If "with age comes wisdom" this shows that with experience the fox learns to out-wit

hounds. To quote Mr. Dale, "When at last he is overtaken by death, it is age that runs him to ground, or maybe the teeth of a younger rival."

LIONEL EDWARDS.

## LITERATURE.

### A BOOK OF THE WEEK.

IS Scotland losing its old romantic attachment to Bonnie Prince Charlie? The question is forced on us when a scion of an ancient family, who not only had an ancestor out in the '45, but one who was a devoted leader under the Young Pretender, finds in William, Duke of Cumberland, the "hero of Culloden." Victor he was, but hero? To say so is to upset tradition, which found its hero in the gallant but beaten Prince, who for months after was chased and hunted in the straths and corries with a price of £30,000 upon his head, and no hungry, bare-legged Highlander so base as to be tempted by the money. Charles, at any rate, was the hero of song and sentiment. However, the Hon. Evan Charteris has taken up the cudgels in favour of the protagonist of Charles, and in his book, *William Augustus Duke of Cumberland: His Early Life and Times* (Edward Arnold), tries to convince us that the Hanoverian General has been badly traduced. He is indeed a skilled and able advocate, who, in a previous book, proved his perfect familiarity with the scenes and characters of the '45. Let us say at once he interests but does not convince. In making out his case he is content to try and establish the negative point that the Duke was no worse than his age. No historian has yet had the hardihood to contend that there was either mercy or magnanimity in the Hanoverian treatment of the Stewart rebels. The spirit of the Duke is unerringly seen in his despatch to the Duke of Newcastle after the surrender of Carlisle garrison:

"I wish I could have blooded the soldiers with these villains, but it would have cost us many a brave fellow, and it comes to the same end, as they have no sort of claim to the King's mercy and I sincerely hope will meet with none."

In mitigation of this and other equally significant passages in the Duke's despatches, Mr. Charteris arrays a lot of contemporary remarks that are very easily discounted in the case of a man who has "H.R.H." attached to his name. A statue was erected to him in 1770 by Lieutenant-General William Strobe with the inscription:

In gratitude for his private kindness; in honour to his public virtue.

But we all know what value is to be attached to an eighteenth century epitaph or inscription. Later the statue was removed and melted without exciting any protest. Not much more importance can be attached to a passage like the following:

"Our young Hero," wrote Newcastle on January 6th, "returned yesterday morning highly pleased and satisfied with having drove the rebels into their own country, and having bravely retaken Carlisle, considering his strength and the material he had to do it with. All the world is in love with him, and he deserves it."

Of course, the author takes a much more favourable view of Newcastle than is usual with historians, but even so the language is to be discounted as that of diplomacy and partiality.

A man is known by his friends, and far more significant, in our opinion, is Cumberland's high opinion of Henry Hawley, known among soldiers as "The Hangman." Mr. Charteris says of him with not less than justice:

The gibbet and the halberds, indeed, seem to have been his sole means of enforcing obedience or establishing discipline, and beyond these his ideas did not carry him.

Confirmation of all this is supplied by one of the myriad singular, out-of-the-way passages in the volume:

A curious lawsuit gives an approximate idea of his size. A man backed himself to produce an individual who would weigh twice as much as Cumberland. As there were no means of persuading the King's son into the scales, the Duke's weight was agreed at 20 stone, which was supposed to be two more than he actually weighed. One Bright was then produced, who weighed 42½ stone. The plaintiff invoked the law for the recovery of his wager. "There," writes Horace Walpole, "were the Duke's twenty stone bawled over a thousand times—but the righteous law decided against the man who has won." With this accession of weight, the Duke's countenance had coarsened. The portrait by Sir Joshua, painted ten years later, shows features the moulding of which, though not without distinction, is marred by an ungainly excess of flesh.

No, in spite of the author's most persuasive writing, we are inclined to think the popular verdict on "the Butcher" was not far from the truth. It took Queen Victoria many years of exalted conduct to get over the dislike engendered by the Hanoverian kings. As to the Stewarts, their faults, too, were patent to the eye, but they were accompanied by certain very Royal characteristics. Charles I. at least knew how to die nobly; Charles II. won hearts even if he shocked morals; and the Young Pretender was at any rate the hero

of a lost cause. No figure in Scottish history so brought out the truth of the adage that "dark and true and tender is the North," and if his cause after the fight on Culloden Moor was that of one who had not only failed, but lost heart, we can draw a veil over it for the sake of the splendid loyalty of his wild Highland followers which has added a noble chapter to history.

### MR. MASEFIELD'S NEW POEM.

*The Daffodil Fields*, by John Masefield. (Heinemann.)

A SHILLING shocker in verse is the descriptive phrase to which this poem lays itself open. It makes the lover of poetry rage all the more because the verse is at times so good. But how else can you describe the story? A maiden loves a wild youth who has been expelled the college to which his father by much pinching has sent him. He, at first lukewarm, ends by returning her affection with fervour. But to make their joint fortune he goes off to the Argentine, where among cowboys he strays from the path of virtue, forgets his sweetheart in drink and falls a willing victim to the charms of a Spanish Delilah. A third actor in the drama is the flawless lover who has figured so often in a certain kind of fiction. Disinterested and magnanimous to a degree unknown save to the imagination, he is not only true to his love, but makes superhuman efforts to secure her happiness by reclaiming the vagrant. In vain, in vain; the wild hawk has flown, and will not stoop to the lure. At length the love-lorn, hopeless maiden rewards the selfless devotion and this very perfect lover with her hand, but that is only the beginning of the end. The lost one hears of her marriage, and in the true dog-in-the-manger spirit returns, and so brings about a series of interviews as mad and bad and sad as the most morbid could wish, leading up to the great climax—a fight with hedging-knives, death of both lovers, dying speeches *ad infinitum*, and, finally, piteous death of the heroine from that old, very old complaint a broken heart. It is impossible to write seriously of this sort of stuff. Yet the poem contains many lovely passages and fine lines, which accentuate our regret that an author with real poetry in him should play to the gallery or, as a greater hath said, try to split the ears of the groundlings.

### THE CAMPAGNA AS A LAND TO BE LIVED IN.

*The Roman Campagna*, by Arnaldo Cervasato. (Fisher Unwin.)

NO excuse need be made for the patriotic observer who regards his country primarily as a land to be lived in. This is the attitude of Signor Cervasato, whose pleasant and instructive contribution to the literature of a district, never very fertile and never thickly populated, yet richer in historical association than any other region of equal area in Europe, and, perhaps, in the world, is the outcome of painstaking and sympathetic personal investigation on the part of the author; and if his archaeology be negligible and his history but the history of the guide-books, this is because the Campagna that interests him most is not the Campagna, however fascinating, of the historian and the digger after buried treasure, nor yet the Campagna of the artist and the happy sojourner, but the Campagna, melancholy and dispiriting, of the peasant toiler, badly fed, badly paid, badly housed, cut off, at the very gates of the Eternal City, from intercourse with the outer world, and lamentably stricken by disease. The careful student of economic and social conditions is not blind to the beauty of what appears to him "the most tragic landscape in Europe," but he is more saddened by the barren solitudes of this sparsely-peopled country than enchanted by its serene spaciousness and that brooding peace which makes for the leisured traveller so large a part of the imperishable charm of the Latin Land. Signor Cervasato, who dedicates his volume to the pioneers of civilisation in the Campagna Romana, pays a merited tribute to the labours of the Red Cross Society, whose services in the alleviation of human misery and the reclamation of the land from the abomination of desolation can hardly be exaggerated; and it is gratifying to note that improvement may already be recorded in the conditions of peasant life and labour. Apart from its interesting record of native character and customs the book would be justified by its illustrations, which are extremely numerous and for the most part admirable. A folding map at the end of the volume would add to the satisfaction of the methodical reader whose geography is not equal to his interest in the Italian scene.

### THE POISONOUS SNAKES OF INDIA.

*The Poisonous Terrestrial Snakes of our British Indian Dominions (Including Ceylon) and how to recognise them, with Symptoms of Snake Poisoning and Treatment*, by Major F. Wall. Third edition.

THE first edition of this useful manual was reviewed in COUNTRY LIFE, April, 1908. The chief additions to the new issue consist in the intercalation of a few species described in the meantime by Major Wall, and the addition of a series of chapters dealing with snake bite and its effect, and the constitution of the different poisons, with suggestions as to the treatment of people bitten. The measures to be adopted in combating the effects of snake poison are considered under three headings: (1) Preventive, which aims at preventing the absorption of any venom that may have been discharged into the wound or reducing the dose absorbed; (2) Antidotal, which aims at introducing into the blood an agent that will neutralise and render inert any venom that has been absorbed; (3) Symptomatic, which aims at undoing the evil effects wrought by the absorption of venom into the system. Under the first heading Major Wall shows the dubitable value of the three measures recommended by many authorities, viz., ligature, excision and amputation, but does not recommend anything in their place. Under the second, antitoxin, or anti-poisonous serotherapy (prepared from the blood of horses that have been subjected to progressively



increasing doses of poison), is regarded as the only remedial agent; but as the antitoxin prepared in India is only curative in the case of the bite of the cobra and Russell's viper, other accidents are not provided for in a country like India, where so many kinds of dangerous snakes occur, each with its own specific poison. And lastly, under the third heading, the author discountenances the taking of alcohol, ammonia and strychnia, but recommends the injection of calcium under the skin in the case of viperine poisoning, and of adrenalin (the active principle of a gland situated near the kidney) to counteract the effects of the poison of Russell's viper, the banded bungarus and the hamadryad. The "key" for the easy distinction of poisonous from harmless snakes is practically the same as in the first edition, and it may be well to warn those who should try to use it that it does not always turn in the lock. A true viper (*Eristicophis macmahoni*) from Baluchistan differs from the author's definition or Pitlan viper in showing three or four rows of scales on each side of the ventrals when laid on its back, while the same deviation from the normal may obtain in other snakes of the same group when the body is much disturbed by pregnancy or undigested food.

### NOVELS.

**The Dark Flower**, by John Galsworthy. (William Heinemann.)

THE dark flower of Mr. Galsworthy's title is passion. Three times in the course of the novel does it enter the life of Mark Lennan, to leave its own peculiar impression upon him, and at the three first seasons of his existence, Spring, Summer, Autumn. In Spring, Lennan, young, ardent, imaginative, impressionable, meets it in Anna Stomer, the wife of his college tutor. Anna, to whom life has denied more than a weak travesty of passion, loves the youth who is several years her junior; she hesitates to awaken and use him; while she hesitates the chance to do so is taken from her and she slips back into oblivion, leaving but slight impression upon his character. In Summer, the sculptor, after six years of art in Rome and Paris, years that have stolen innocence but left him still the prey of the second man in him, meets with Olive Cramier, again, a married woman. The pair love, but this time Lennan and she determine to seize their happiness at any cost; in the moment of fulfilment Robert Cramier savagely puts and end to all and Lennan is again adrift at the mercy of his passions. The third season, Autumn, finds him married to the girl friend of his boyhood, Sylvia Doone; and now Fate, in real earnest, makes her sport of him; he falls under the influence of Nell Dromore—the illegitimate daughter of Johnny Dromore—a beautiful, innocent and seductive child whose dormant passions claim him with an extraordinary power. To take her or not is the problem that now faces him in all the urgency of the powerful obsession which has fierce hold of him at a time when all save age seems as if it would slip past him. On his refusal of her the story ends, a curious, slightly morbid, but extraordinarily acute and truthful analysis of the effect of passion upon character, its inevitable under-current in the stream of a man's life. Mr. Galsworthy has not done anything better than *The Dark Flower*. In it he attains, by seemingly simple and unstudied means, a trenchant and intensely human disclosure of the betraying second self that nature has hidden away in mankind for her own purposes, both to mock and allure him. Hardly so much a novel as a series of studies in passion, falling naturally into three parts, the book has the impressiveness which the sincere and earnest expression of an original and cultured mind conveys.

**Watersprings**, by A. C. Benson. (Smith, Elder and Co.)

WHEN a well-intentioned acquaintance takes you gently but firmly by the buttonhole and proceeds with an easy ingenuousness to relate to you, at considerable length and with many asides, a rambling but moderately interesting story, your first instinct may be to shake yourself free. But, if you are good-natured and possibly a little bored with your own society, you may be more complaisant and may lend an attentive ear. Once having done this in the case of Mr. A. C. Benson who will remain complaisant to his story's end, not because it is in any way remarkable or engrossing, but because of the quiet certainty of the author that his tale ought to interest you. Mr. A. C. Benson determines to write a novel, his kind philosophic mind attempts the romance of an elderly Cambridge don, pedantic, gently satirical, sentimental and affectionate. We quite like Howard Kennedy in spite of the number of times he indulges a maidenly impulse to kiss his aunt or consult with her upon her spiritual condition and his own; there is a reminiscent flavour of the young lady of a past generation about our hero in these heart-to-heart talks. Yet while the story ambles pleasantly on, we are not dull; and our critical faculties somewhat blunted, we fall back gratefully upon the comfortable mental ease this writer of the kindest intentions induces by his amiable sincerity.

**Two Little Parisians**, by Pierre Mille. (The Bodley Head.)

CAILLOU and TILI are as delightful a youthful pair as you could wish to meet. The mental growth of the imaginative little lad and the more complex, but not less interesting small girl, are admirably contrasted in the series of impressions lightly sketched in here for our amusement, and abandoned as easily and as gracefully as they were entered upon. Into the child mind of Caillou, in particular, the author has penetrated with such sympathetic insight as few but a child-lover and a clever psychologist could betray; yet the child always remains a child in a world of his own to which it is not always possible even for the most intuitive of elders to find his way. There is the tragedy of the little lad's anxiety as to his sex when week-days find him clad as a girl and Sundays blossoming forth as a man; while the horse's egg that hatched a rabbit threatens a disillusionment which few, reading the story, could not but wish deferred. Again, Caillou stalks a crocodile in fear and trembling, refusing to give up the dangerous adventure until, driven into a corner by the wily arguments of his seniors as to his imminent peril, he has to own up sulkily: "There's not any danger, because—because—there's not any crocodile really. I only say there is, but it isn't really true." It is the world of make-believe rudely demolished from outside. A delicate and rare understanding of the mind of a child, coupled with a charming sense of humour, should commend this book to many.

**The Magic Fire**, by Frances Hammond. (Chapman and Hall.)

THERE is much that is excellent in Miss Frances Hammond's study of Norma Dundas, the daughter of an artist of no mean attainments and slight application whose dilettante attitude towards the gift that is his costs his wife her life and his daughter her virtue. Norma Dundas is hardly out of her teens when she finds her-

self thrown upon the charity of relatives whose eager desire is to shelve responsibility as soon as possible. A period of somewhat joyless independence follows, and suddenly she is swept out of her depth in the struggle for life. Up to this point the story promises well; her betrayal by the writer, Harry Churchill, however, marks the novel's decline in interest; it shows, too, on the author's part, a weakened grip of her characters. The love affair with Hugh Daventry is unnecessary, and the appearance of the "dark woman" strikes a note of unreality. This is disappointing since Miss Hammond's story promised so well in the careful discrimination with which characters and incidents were introduced; but her tale is, on the whole, readable; it betrays, too, some originality.

**The Truth About Camilla**, by Gertrude Hall. (William Heinemann.)

THE histrionic talent and audacity of Miss Gertrude Hall's Camilla are two qualities so well developed that they take away the breath of her admirers, while they seriously tax the credulity of those whose obstinate allegiance they threaten to undermine. At the opening of her story the kindly Don Ignio, discovering the little girl with her brothers and sisters at play in the Garden of Simples, and perceiving in her qualities beyond the average, determines to try to win over Count Mari, a former employer of Antenore Bugiani, to extend his patronage to the daughter of the defaulting steward. Count Mari consents to see the child, who, brought to him for approval, is dumb and awkward before him, to the discomfiture of the old priest, her sponsor. In the family circle, however, another tale is told to an admiring audience by Camilla, whose facile tongue discovers her to them as making a notable impression upon the Count, reciting to him to his satisfaction and to her own "great honour." This questionable gift of plausible and audacious invention does not lie fallow in the years that follow Camilla's education at the well recommended Institut Heller, an excellent start of which she takes the fullest advantage, and from which, thanks to her wit and intelligence, she gradually raises herself, by conscientious application to her own interests, from teacher of languages to companion to an elderly author, ostensible wife of a prince, actual wife to the great tenor, Manuel de Segovia, and, last of all, at the age of fifty, Marchesa Filiberti. That the sympathy of the reader is with the schemer from first to last cannot be denied; for there is a fine courage in this feminine soldier of Fortune. She never pules or whines, let Fate deal her worst blows, and she spares herself no exercise of patience and endurance to attain her goal. Well constructed and well written, the novel is an excellent one, betrays sound judgment, shrewd observation, and no mean sense of humour.

**The Pot of Basil**, by Bernard Capes. (Constable.)

"THE POT OF BASIL" is a love idyll based upon the wooing by proxy of the Infanta Marie-Isabelle by the Archduke Joseph of Austria. Travelling incognito as the Comte de Falckenstein, and accompanied by the young soldier of fortune, Tiretta, a stranger whom he has met and attached to himself in Rome, the Archduke Joseph, nearing Colono, comes unexpectedly upon a glimpse of a beautiful vision of girlhood reaching after a lily in a pool by the roadside. Joseph, fascinated by the sight, instructs Tiretta, as his ambassador, to present the nixie of the pool with a ring from the Comte de Falckenstein, and in accomplishing this mission Tiretta discovers her to be the Infanta herself, whose annoyance and displeasure is heavily visited upon him. The Archduke fearing the lady's disapproval, Tiretta is persuaded to act the part of Paolo to his Francesca, and out of this position a dainty and poetic love story is gracefully woven.

**The Vulgar Lover**, by Vincent Brown. (Chapman and Hall.)

MR. VINCENT BROWN does not write for popularity. He has sincere convictions, and to these he remains faithful in his work, in spite of the fact that the average reader reads to be amused, or in some fashion pleasantly diverted. *The Vulgar Lover* is not amusing; its title is far removed from the tragedy it covers, a tragedy heightened by the effective grouping and handling of situations which are both terrible and commonplace. There is an ironical justice in the attitude of this author towards the half-dozen participants in a drama at once complicated in its emotional possibilities and simple in its progression. When the story opens, Juxon Rhoden, self-made, wealthy, married, and the father of a son who is of age to discover and appreciate a moral lapse, has secretly seduced the wife of Kedar Slond, the village shoemaker. Slond's wife has disappeared. No one knows her whereabouts; her husband, silent, passionate, morose, is equally in the dark. Between Juxon and his son there is strife; Sidney is bent upon an unsuitable marriage; his father opposes him. The younger Rhoden, aware of the position of Juxon towards Slond's wife, can hardly curb his passionate anger at the wrong done to his mother, while Juxon's opposition to the lad's marriage adds to his hatred. It is obvious that the truth cannot long remain unknown to Clara Rhoden, and Juxon Rhoden, driven into a corner when confronted by the return of Annie Slond to the village and his wife's realisation of her position, loses his bluster and becomes the prey to an obsession in which he sees himself hunted by his son, a would-be murderer. When Juxon Rhoden is found killed, these fears of his are remembered, and it would seem at first that the younger Rhoden is to lose his life. Mr. Vincent Brown, however, grants us a happier ending, and the story closes under less sinister auspices than those with which it began.

**Thorley Weir**, by E. F. Benson. (Smith, Elder.)

MR. E. F. BENSON has the happy knack of telling a story in such a pleasant, unaffected manner that it is difficult to criticise unkindly what he says because of the agreeable way in which he says it. In *Thorley Weir* his characters are certainly quite delightfully human, natural, unaffected people with whom it is a genuine satisfaction to come in contact. Joyce Wroughton is a charming young woman with no nonsense about her, her grandmother is the modern grandmother Mr. Benson can so well portray, who talks slang and dresses like an *ingénue*, and the two Lathoms, artist and gatekeeper at Thistleton's Gallery, make a pair of devoted and admirable sons whose devotion to their beautiful mother gives the author several opportunities of portraying the ideal family life. The story of how luck came to Charles Lathom at the hands of Arthur Craddock is a plausible one, though there is much of the fairy-tale about it; but the sudden turning of the tables on Craddock by Lathom and Frank Armstrong, and the former's abject collapse, is farcical and absurd. However, as has been said, it is the characterisation that is good.



## BIRDS OF PREY IN THE HIGHLANDS.



H. B. Macpherson.

GOLDEN EAGLE AT THE EYRIE.

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**T**O naturalists and sportsmen in general a short review of the present position of our few remaining species of predatory birds in the Scottish Highlands may not be without interest, and it is in the hope that the following remarks may be of some slight service to those who have the preservation of our rarer birds at heart that these lines are penned. Of those which are now practically extinct—the osprey, the kite, the harriers, the goshawk—there is little need to write. Their cause has often been pleaded by

abler pens than mine, and the story of their destruction has been often and well described. The survival of the few remaining harriers and of the white-tailed eagle depends mainly upon the protection of those on whose land they nest; and although on the verge of extinction, there is some hope of their survival so long as their nesting-places can be kept secret and undisturbed by collectors. A spirit of toleration towards the surviving predatory birds is gradually spreading in the Highlands. Some of our largest proprietors and game-preservers



H. B. Macpherson.

GOLDEN EAGLE AND HER YOUNG

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are openly protecting eyries of the golden eagle and the peregrine falcon; while the raven, whose ravages among sheep-stock are often grossly exaggerated, is also permitted to rear its brood in peace on these sanctuaries for wild bird-life. The steady increase of the area devoted to red deer and the large extent of moorland which has been re-planted during the last forty years have

probably assisted towards the survival of many rare birds, predatory and otherwise. The knowledge disseminated by naturalists among keepers and landowners during recent years has at length begun to take effect, and it is now being realised that although certain species are undoubtedly destructive to game, the good which they do in acting as scavengers on the moorland and destroying the weakly birds which are most likely to be subject to various diseases, as well as in destroying vermin of different kinds, in many cases outweighs the damage for which they are responsible.

Comparatively recently the writer described the habits of the golden eagle during the nesting season at considerable length, and this bird has been the subject of so much writing that it is not necessary to dwell upon its habits. A few remarks, however, may not be out of place. On the whole, I should say that this species is increasing in the Highlands—so much so that in certain districts shooting tenants have been known



H. B. Macpherson.

KESTREL BROODING.

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to complain that many of their grouse-drives were spoilt by the appearance of these birds either before or during a drive. It should, however, be remembered that the eagle, although driving birds from a certain beat on one occasion, may have driven many into the same area on other occasions, for which, owing to ignorance of its movements, the king of birds receives no credit. In

the district where the writer resides the proportion of eyries where only one young bird is reared is unfortunately large, although the past season has been more favourable in this respect. The eyries being mostly at a high altitude, the first egg is probably liable to be spoilt and rendered unfertile by frost, and even when two eaglets are hatched it is too often a case of the survival of the fittest, the weakly bird succumbing to exposure during the absence of the parents when the latter are hunting. During the course of my observations I have been glad to find that hares and rabbits, where these were available, formed a large proportion of the prey brought to the eyrie. In no case have I found lambs or red deer calves, as described by other authors, and I conclude that the latter are only taken when other game is scarce. On one occasion only was I the witness of the apparent failure of the old birds to obtain prey for the eyrie, and the youngster, furious at their failure, was obviously disgusted by the offerings of grass and heather with



H. B. Macpherson.

A MERLIN BALANCING ITSELF ON A TUFT OF HEATHER.

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which its mother endeavoured to appease it. Another point of interest is that among all the victims brought to the eyries I have never yet seen the dotterel or the golden plover, both of which nest in the neighbourhood. These species probably owe their safety to their marvellous resemblance to their surroundings.

On the authority of different observers the eagle has been credited with courage and daring which, if the stories of their attacks on people at or near the nest were indeed true, would render the bird a most dangerous opponent. If its pluck were equal to its size, no man could approach an eyrie with impunity, and the pair of old birds could make it very awkward for a climber attempting to reach the nest. Personally, I have found the eagle an arrant coward, though perhaps less nervous of the fall of a focal-plane shutter than many smaller birds. It has none of the dash of the peregrine, and sails leisurely away to a distance, leaving its eggs or young at the mercy of the intruder, while the falcon has stooped so near me that it has almost swept the hat from my head when engaged in photographing its young.

In spite of this fact, the golden eagle will probably maintain its title to be considered the king of birds, its size and dignity, combined with its magnificent feats of soaring when on the wing, being its chief claims to the title. It is to the credit of Highland game-preservers and shooting tenants that this grand bird is still holding its own, and posterity will owe them a debt of gratitude in an age when the marvels of bird-life are at last receiving due appreciation. The buzzard, so similar in many respects to the eagle, though smaller in size, is a comparatively harmless bird which is also still fairly plentiful in certain districts. As a nesting species it is now found chiefly on the West Coast and in Ross-shire and Sutherland, and, curiously enough, is practically unknown, except on migration, in Badenoch, one of the chief strongholds of the golden eagle. In the autumn this locality is always visited by migrating birds of this species, but I am not aware of a single nesting site between the County March and Strathspey. It is now becoming gradually recognised that the buzzard seldom takes winged game, voles, mice, rats and rabbits being probably its staple diet. The sparrow-hawk is still fairly plentiful, and although I personally would never raise a gun to any member of the hawk tribe, there can be little blame attached to keepers for its destruction. It is far and away the most destructive bird of prey in the British Islands, and seems to hold its own in spite of persecution, and the growth of young plantations affords this species a refuge which will probably lead to its increase in the near future. The kestrel and the owls may be classed together, since their prey is chiefly mice and such small deer, though both will, on certain occasions, take young game. The rule observed by all sensible keepers and game-preservers is to protect these species on account of the good which they do, destroying only the few malefactors which take to evil courses. The barn owl is rare in the Highlands, the tawny and long-eared so common that, as long as the above rule is observed, there can be no fear of their extinction. The same applies to the kestrel, and few open-minded keepers will take an opposite view. The most beautiful of British falcons, the little merlin, so small a bird that it can balance itself on a tuft of heather, deserves a few words. Undoubtedly the merlin takes young grouse occasionally, but it is far from common, and I would plead for its protection. Its principal food consists of small birds, and it is not such an inveterate mouse-hunter as the kestrel. The approach of the old bird to the nest is often heralded by a shrill scream, and on hearing this cry the young are immediately on the alert, food left with them by the parents being devoured rapidly when the former are old enough to tear the prey for themselves. They fight viciously for the coveted morsels, both wings being outspread to prevent others of the brood from securing them. During the visits of the old birds they behave like well trained school-children. There is no fighting or squabbling in the presence of their mother, and each youngster is fed in turn.

A few words in conclusion on the peregrine will not be out of place. A dashing bird of the highest courage, this species is famous as the falcon of falcons, admired by all sportsmen for its qualities of endurance, pluck and speed. Peregrines are all too few in the Highlands, and it is to be hoped that those who seek to destroy them will remember that it is not easy to re-establish a species which has once become extinct. As a book has just been published on their habits and life-history, it is not for me to discuss their ways in this article, of which the chief object has been to indicate the present position of our Highland birds of prey. Fortunately, this falcon does not care for carrion, so is seldom trapped except at the eyrie. Let those who can admire the qualities which all men respected most in the knights of olden time protect and spare the peregrine, and their reward will be in the gratitude

of all bird-lovers and ornithologists of the future. Could our ancestors revisit the scenes in which they hunted of old, they would find our woods strangely desolate; they would miss the cries and forms of many birds and animals which they oftentimes met on their excursions and in their sport. No longer would they see the kite and the osprey, the marten-cat and the wild cat; they would wander in vain where the erne, sung of by minstrels in days gone by, sheltered her brood; they would perchance ask what we, their successors, had done with the heritage of wild-life which they had bequeathed to us. Though a game-preserver and a lover of all our wild sports, I would close this short article with an earnest appeal to all who love our native woods and moors to join in the protection of our rarer birds of prey, lest they, too, vanish from our midst with others which are not predatorily inclined, and leave us in a desolate land where life is scarce, and where man may have leisure to consider, too late, the havoc which he has wrought among the fairest and most graceful of God's creatures.

H. B. M.

## IN THE GARDEN.

### FUCHSIAS FOR THE OUTDOOR GARDEN.

IT is a rather curious fact that although wonderful progress has of late years been made in the improvement of certain kinds of plants, others have been almost untouched by the hybridist, and remain much as they were in the days of our forefathers. Into this latter category must come the hardy Fuchsias, plants, it is true, that are scarcely suitable for bleak, exposed gardens or where the soil is naturally cold and wet, but which are, nevertheless, much hardier than many would have us believe. A few new hybrids have been raised, but of the genuineness of their claim to hardiness little is really known. That the older kinds of proved hardiness are of considerable value in the autumn garden no one who has seen them really well cultivated will deny. On the South Coast, and in some parts of the Isle of Wight, one occasionally finds them attaining a height of ten feet or even more, and at Bosahan in Cornwall there is a hedge of huge dimensions which can only be kept within bounds by a severe annual pruning. In other less favoured localities, however, the plants frequently get killed down almost, if not quite, to the ground level during the winter months, and here one naturally has to rely upon new wood to furnish the flowers, cutting away each spring what has been destroyed. Even so, the plants are particularly graceful and pleasing, and withstand boisterous winds much better than many shrubs and herbaceous plants, the slender yet tough stems offering but little resistance. Rain, too, does not injure the flowers, owing to their pendulous character, hence one would like to see them more extensively cultivated than they are at present.

It is essential for their well-being that the soil in which these Fuchsias are planted be well drained, as stagnant moisture about their roots during winter is more fatal than frosts. In this respect one might well take a lesson from cottage gardens, where these Fuchsias often thrive so well. Here one usually finds them tucked in close against the cottage walls, where the drainage is good and where the brickwork assists in absorbing superfluous water, and also provides some shelter above ground. But this thorough drainage must not be taken to mean that they will suffer drought in summer with impunity. If this occurs the minute insect known to gardeners as red spider will wreak havoc among the foliage, and bare stems will quickly result. Good medium loam, enriched each spring with a top-dressing of short, decayed manure, is as good a rooting medium as one can have, and this should be provided wherever possible. There is one other little point that must not be lost sight of in cultivating hardy Fuchsias. Old-established plants suffer far less from frost and cold weather generally than younger, newly planted specimens, hence the moral is that it is wise to leave them alone when they are doing well and not attempt to divide them, however sorely one may be tempted to do so. Spring is undoubtedly the best season for planting, and as most nurserymen supply them in pots, they ought not to suffer very much in the moving. It is, however, well to stipulate that dormant plants be supplied. During the winter months in all but the most favoured localities the cornus of the plants must be protected with stale coal-ashes, heather or dried bracken, and this is particularly necessary with those that were planted in the previous spring.

There are not a great many kinds to select from. The hardiest of all is *F. Riccartonii*, which makes a good and neat shrub with crimson and purple flowers. *F. macrostemma gracilis*, also with crimson and purple flowers, is excellent. *F. m. coccinea* is rather later flowering, the tubes and sepals of the flowers



being long and scarlet crimson in colour. *F. m. globosa* is dwarf and free-flowering, but the blossoms are rather dull in colour and for that reason do not find favour with many. A hybrid that has proved hardy in many gardens in the Southern Counties is named *Mme. Corneillon*. It has comparatively large flowers, the scarlet sepals being delicately tinted on the underside with pink. The corolla is white, veined with pink, hence the flower is quite distinct from any other variety of proved hardiness. There are some other hybrids which may have withstood the winters in some gardens, and it would be interesting if those readers who have tried them would record their experiences for the benefit of others, stating the locality and kind of soil.

#### THE EARLY-FLOWERING COSMOS.

DURING the late summer and autumn months few annual plants provide us with such a wealth of flowers for cutting as the early-flowering *Cosmos*. Forming as they do bushy, symmetrical plants from three feet to four feet high, each stem of which is daintily clothed with finely divided, bright green leaves,

they are of decorative value in the garden even before the flowers open. In the old-fashioned *Cosmos bipinnatus*, which is grown so extensively in Australia, flowers seldom appeared until October, with the result that frost destroyed them almost immediately. From the early-flowering race, first introduced about five years ago, this undesirable trait has been eliminated, and the blossoms commence to open early in July and continue until frost calls a halt. In shape the blossoms resemble a much refined single *Dahlia*, but the stems are more slender, though quite tough and wire-like, thus imparting to the flowers an air of gracefulness that is sadly lacking even in the best of the single *Dahlias*. So far three distinct varieties have been put into commerce, namely, *White Queen*, *Rose Queen* and *Crimson King*, the first two being accurately described by their names. *Crimson King*, however, can scarcely be regarded as of that colour, very deep rose pink more accurately conveying to one the hue of its blossoms. But they are all good and easy to cultivate, a packet of seed sown in a warm frame or greenhouse in early spring giving an abundance of plants for the outdoor garden by early June. H.

## ECONOMY AND TASTE IN COTTAGE BUILDING.

### SOME LEADING OPINIONS.

IN last week's issue our readers may remember that we raised a particular point about building cottages. It was that although those of varying shades of politics must differ as to the means by which cottages are to be built, we are all agreed on two points: First, that there is a need for them; and, secondly, that in building, attention should be paid to appropriateness and simple beauty, as well as to economy. From the selection of letters published below it will be seen that this opinion is backed up by those best qualified to speak.

By EARL CURZON OF KEDLESTON.

I quite agree with you about rural cottages. One of the glories of the English country is the English village, and the main glory of the English village is the picturesque and smiling cottage in which the English peasant and his forefathers have been wont to dwell. It would be a national tragedy if, in the building or rebuilding of labourers' cottages that is likely to follow any systematic attempt made by the Legislature to improve the conditions of agricultural life, these old buildings were to be replaced by a new type of standardised cottage, dumped down either singly or—still worse—in rows like a lot of band-boxes or canisters, or dog kennels, or whatever may be the parallel suggested by the precise degree of monotony and monstrosity presented in their construction. It is doubtful whether the labourer would be more comfortable—he certainly would not be happier—and a cruel injury would be done to the beauty of the countryside. The best way to prevent such a catastrophe seems to me to lie in the preparation of plans, sketches and models of cottages of different materials and styles, suitable to differences of locality, climate and surroundings, which could be erected at moderate prices. Such a work, abundantly illustrated and accompanied by careful estimates, might be an invaluable guide to landed proprietors, building societies, syndicates, county or district councils and even to Government departments in the near future. Why do you not undertake it?

By MR. W. JOYNSON HICKS, M.P.

The leading article in last week's issue of *COUNTRY LIFE* deals with a problem which has been too much neglected both by politicians and by agriculturists. It is perfectly true that both parties are agreed as to the necessity for a vast increase in the number of cottages throughout the rural districts of England. I know well that in a paper devoted to rural pursuits politics have no place, and whatever means either party may adopt for securing the regeneration of the countryside, it is common ground that somewhere about one hundred thousand cottages would have to be built. I think I am right in saying that nearly half that number have been built within the last few years in Ireland under the provisions of the Labourers' Cottages Act. A cottage in the shape of a mere aggregation of small rooms covered with a roof is, however, by no means the ultimate end in view. I am not one of those who seek to put art before necessity, but at the same time I am convinced that the erection of mere box cottages would be such an eyesore to our country as to be detrimental to it from a financial standpoint, and that, though a decently designed cottage of an artistic or rural appearance may cost twenty pounds more than a mere box, in the long run it would pay either the landowner or the local authority to spend this extra sum. Writing as one who is not merely a politician, but has had a great deal to do with the management of estates and the provision of cottages, I can personally testify to the pride which the labourer takes in the maintenance of a decent cottage, and the horror with which he would view such a monstrosity as that recently erected by Emmanuel College at Upminster. There is, however, something more important to a cottage than even artistic development, and that is the provision of adequate land surrounding it for a garden, or, still better, for a small holding. If the rural labourer is to be raised from his present position of dependence into anything approaching the independent character of his colleague in the towns, it will have to be by a gradual rise culminating in the possession of some land of his own, and here is another vital objection against cottages of the type of which I complain built all in a row, that it is impossible to surround them with adequate ground. Of course, cottages built in pairs are more economical both in building and in subsequent warmth than detached cottages, and it is quite possible to so build them as to provide adequate ground for each one of the pair; but it is naturally impossible to carry this principle out in regard to cottages built in a row. If *COUNTRY LIFE* can continue the crusade, first in favour of, I will not say

artistic cottages, but cottages of a decent appearance as opposed to those of the box type, and, secondly, in favour of adequate land being allotted to each cottage, irrespective altogether of the political or party aspect of the question, it will do an infinity of good not merely to the labourer, but to the whole of the countryside.

By THE DUKE OF NEWCASTLE.

I am much obliged for your letter, and need not say that I most heartily concur with the opinions expressed in your leading article on country cottages. I am frequently horrified when motoring through beautiful country to see the hideous type of cottages which are everywhere being erected. It is entirely unnecessary, because I know that cottages which are, at any rate, inoffensive can be erected at a very trifling increase of cost.

By VISCOUNT ELIBANK.

In reply to your letter, I quite agree with you that more cottages ought to be built for the labouring classes in various parts of the United Kingdom and Ireland; but with regard to the style of architecture, I would leave that to the owner of the property. All people do not think alike, and doubtless owners would not put up cottages that in their opinion would be an eyesore on the estate, or cottages which would tumble down the following year, which, I take it, is what you are afraid of. The Government may insist on better accommodation, but the style of the cottage should be left to the owner of the property who has to erect them.

By LORD METHUEN.

I am sure anyone who has any kind of taste must agree with the contents of your article. The great difficulty is the cost. Of course, this varies in different parts of England, but most certainly I cannot build cottages at the price named—for this reason, I have, out of some forty cottages, built four that do me no credit from an artistic point of view. But it was Hobson's choice, and I fear there are others like myself ready enough to build artistic cottages if their purses were more full.

By MR. W. WATSON RUTHERFORD, M.P.

I am in receipt of your letter kindly sending me an enclosure from *COUNTRY LIFE* showing what Emmanuel College destroyed and what they built. It is certainly a most shocking example, and I have long been of opinion myself that labourers' cottages ought to be built with the greatest possible care with regard to artistic and sanitary effect. It is very nearly as cheap to build a well-designed house as to build one which would be an eyesore to the district, and it certainly is not necessary to build a labourer's cottage of materials or in the style to last four or five hundred years. Simplicity, after all, is one of the most beautiful attributes of any building, and in my opinion the requirements of most local authorities with regard to the structure of buildings are oppressive and, in many cases, positively absurd. One of the greatest difficulties, of course, in building any number of houses in rural districts must inevitably be the drainage. Of course, I am aware that *COUNTRY LIFE* takes no part in politics, but I cannot help adding that, in my opinion, the best results can only be obtained by giving all possible facilities to the agricultural labourer to become eventually the owner of his own freehold. Experience goes to show that the man who owns his own house will spend his time and often some of his money in decorating and improving his house, if only it belongs to himself, and there is a pride in possession which might be made great use of as an incentive. The subject is an exceedingly difficult one, and, in my opinion, it ought to be grappled with on a plane entirely irrespective of politics.

By MR. RAMSAY MACDONALD, M.P.

I am thoroughly in agreement with you that it would be nothing short of a national disaster if we began building cottages that are ugly, shoddy and uneconomically cheap. If the wages of agricultural labourers will not bear the payment of an economic rent the wages ought to be raised.

By SIR HENRY CRAIK, K.C.B., M.P.

Sir Henry Craik entirely agrees that in the building of cottages economy may and ought to be combined with good taste. The latter is too frequently absent, and Sir Henry Craik regrets that so conspicuous an instance of failure to have any regard to the dictates of taste should be furnished by the authorities of Emmanuel College, Cambridge. It is probably another instance of a collegiate body being guilty of acts of which its members would individually have been ashamed. Such bodies corporate frequently in their joint action show lack of common intelligence.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

## "AN ATROCIOUS VANDALISM."

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I have seen with great interest your leader on the design of rural cottages, and the striking photographs illustrating the vandalism of Emmanuel College, Cambridge. I quite agree with you that it is a matter of the greatest importance to secure that the new cottages, admitted by all parties to be necessary, should be built so as to adorn, not disfigure, the countryside, and in raising the question you do a national service. As a practical suggestion, might not the Board of Agriculture be asked to reconsider their present set of drawings in conjunction with the Institute of British Architects? With such help it ought to be possible to compile a series of satisfactory designs suitable to the different materials of construction in use in different parts of the country and within the rigid limitations of cost imposed by the economic necessities of the case. The excellent series of designs contained in the "Country Life Book of Cottages" would no doubt provide many suggestions as to the way in which this result might be achieved. The Board of Agriculture should circulate to local authorities an official memorandum full of such alternative illustrations.—LESLIE SCOTT.



THE EMMANUEL COLLEGE ATROCITY IN THEIR OWN FIRST COURT.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I have just read a letter in your paper from Mr. Halls on the subject of the cottage destroyed by Emmanuel College and the vulgar, unsightly building they have erected, in spite of the fact that several gentlemen in the neighbourhood would have gladly bought and repaired the old cottage and so kept this lovely little hamlet from the "hands of the jerry-builder

and vulgarian." I live on a hill near Upminster Common, from which a lovely view is obtained; but now there is a blot on the landscape which will descend to posterity as an example of the taste of Emmanuel College. How would Emmanuel like such a building close to the College? And my house dates back to 1472.—AN OLD ETONIAN.

[Our artist has tried to show the effect imagined by our correspondent.—ED.]

## OLD AND NEW COTTAGES.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Every lover of our country-side owes an inextinguishable debt of gratitude to COUNTRY LIFE for all it has done and is doing, on the one hand to encourage the preservation of old monuments and buildings and, on the other, by instigation and example to urge the building of homes for our poor which shall not be only fitting and decent, but also pleasing to the eye and in harmony with their surroundings. How much remains to be done in both directions can, perhaps, be only fully realised by those who daily see the terrible eye-sores which are gradually replacing beautiful old buildings which have been condemned—and rightly condemned—by the sanitary authorities as unfit for human habitation. But need these insanitary conditions necessitate wholesale destruction? Where, as in Warwickshire, most of the old cottages are built of stone—walls of stout masonry which have stood for hundreds of years—would it not be possible, by converting, restoring and adding, to make them into decent dwellings at no more, if as much cost, as is involved by pulling them down and putting up hideous buildings of glaring red brick and slate? It is a thousand pities that some authority cannot intervene to save the beauty of our country villages, which are surely as much a part of our national inheritance as any old bridge or larger monument of the past. The public wax righteously indignant when there is any question of pulling down or rebuilding in Stratford-on-Avon; surely it may feel that intervention is more than equally necessary when other ancient buildings in Shakespeare's country are threatened with destruction. It is hard to understand why cottages in Broadway and Chipping Campden should be jealously preserved while those of equal beauty in many a neighbouring hamlet should be sacrificed. Upper Quinton, Gloucestershire, beautifully situated on the lower slopes of Meon Hill, about five miles from Stratford-on-Avon, is built round a large, irregular square of green. A fairer spot it would be hard to find, nor, with some painful exceptions, more beautiful buildings; but most of the wonderful old cottages are condemned, and, when they go, will most probably be replaced by the sort of house which already is to be found there, in ghastly contrast to its ancient neighbours. It is a fact that the building of cottages is by



CONDEMNED AT QUINTON.



NEW-BUILT AT QUINTON.



no means a remunerative investment. Many a heavily-burdened land-owner might well plead that his purse would not allow him to consider aesthetics, and this is even more true of the case of the small owner of village house property; but the latter might be persuaded not to destroy the old cottages if he could be shown that they could be rendered habitable at no more cost than would be involved by pulling down and rebuilding. The subject bristles with many difficulties. That a man should do what he likes with his own may be bad morality, but the sentiment is deeply rooted in human nature. At the same time, human nature is also liable to be influenced by public opinion, and therefore if *COUNTRY LIFE* and others will continue to rouse public opinion in this matter, something will have been done in the right direction. We have a great deal too much of conversion of labourers' dwellings into week-end cottages *de luxe*, and on every hand I am assured that this is more costly than building new ones. Broadway is becoming spoil and self-conscious by such work. We want the labourers' cottages restored for the labourer, simply and without affectation, and if those who understand the matter would publish some practical hints—possibly in pamphlet form for distribution—something, at any rate, will have been attempted towards the preservation of the beautiful relics of the past which are being daily condemned to destruction.—M. L. STANTON.

[We have strong sympathy with our correspondent's plea that insanitary cottages should be repaired and refitted rather than replaced by new ones. It is true that the remodelling necessary to convert two little cottages into one of adequate size, or the repairs to roof and floors which will ensure a dry and wholesome house, can nearly always be done at far less cost than is involved by rebuilding. Many examples of such repairs have been illustrated in *COUNTRY LIFE* with details of cost, but it is difficult to say in a pamphlet how it can be done, because each case has to be considered on its merits. There are scores of young architects who are accustomed to such work, and we are always ready to give names to our correspondents.—Ed.]

#### EUTHANASIA FOR CATS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—The following information may be of use to readers of your paper who are living quite in the country or in towns where there are no means of putting cats who are ailing, starving or simply dying of old age painlessly to death. It may not be generally known what a good work the Animal Rescue League, 397, City Road, E.C., does. At the rate of two thousand per month, maimed, diseased and starving cats are sent to the "happy hunting grounds" by means of the lethal chamber. For the sum of five shillings the secretary will send an air-tight box in which the cat can be placed with fourpennyworth of prepared chloroform. Any chemist will supply it according to the strength required. For two shillings and sixpence a bag for the same purpose is supplied. A friend of mine here (Jersey), who is a lover of cats and all dumb animals, has invested in one of these boxes, and has "put to sleep" hundreds of stray cats and kittens. It is a quick and perfectly painless death. It should be borne in mind that kittens have great vitality, and require more chloroform than full-grown cats.—G. WELBURN.

#### A THREATENED WINDMILL.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Information has just reached me that the fine and well known old windmill of Blakeney, on the North Coast of Norfolk, is in danger of speedy and entire dismantling. It belonged to the late Lord Calthorpe, and the farmer who bought it states that it does not pay, nor can he let it. It is now in perfect order, and has had about £400 spent on it during the last twenty years. It is now proposed to remove all the sails and machinery and to transform it into a residential house. This particular windmill has been the joy of numberless artists for many a long year, and a delight to every lover of the picturesque, for, in connection with the splendid church, it dominates the landscape for many a mile throughout the district. I hear that the fine windmill of Cley has lately

been rescued from a like threatened fate, and I believe that the one at Blakeney could be rented for a sum of from £12 to £15. Many striking old mills have disappeared to my own knowledge in Norfolk during the last few years, as at Wiveton, Stiffkey, Salthouse and Wells, together with the "post" mills of Langham and Weybourne. Blakeney and Cley are, I believe, the only two left in this part of



THE OLD WINDMILL OF BLAKENEY.

East Anglia. My long-standing affection for the coast-line of Norfolk, and my possession of a charming water-colour drawing of Blakeney Windmill by that rising young artist, Mr. Frank Beresford, are my excuses for invoking the powerful assistance of *COUNTRY LIFE* in the preservation of this striking survival. I enclose you a small photograph of the mill in question, but it fails to depict the charming effect that it has, from its lofty position, on the whole of the landscape.—J. CHARLES COX.

#### EXTERMINATION OF BRACKEN.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Curiously enough, while enquiries regarding the destruction of bracken were appearing in your pages, correspondence on the same subject was being carried on in the *Scotsman*. This has elicited two modes of exterminating bracken other than that described in *COUNTRY LIFE*, and I send a summary of the writers' remarks in the hope that they may prove of some value to proprietors troubled with this "veritable nuisance." The first method of extermination is the simple one of taking hold of the plant in both hands, and pulling straight and steadily upwards until it is plucked out of the soil. Roots and all come clean away so easily that an area of ground can be cleared with much greater rapidity than when the digging method is employed, and the writer states that he has seen considerable areas thoroughly cleared of bracken by this means. The second method—described by its advocate as the most effectual—consists in dragging a chain across the ground when the young shoots have appeared and before they have unfolded. At this stage they are quite tender and snap across readily. Such treatment is said to secure complete eradication almost assuredly after two seasons. Of course, the chain method could be used only on ground clear of tree stumps, rocks and large stones, but, given proper conditions, it appears to be the most scientific, for there is great danger that the pulling or digging up of the more mature plants may scatter a new infection of spores upon the ground. A word may be added as to the spread of bracken. In several Scottish districts it appears to be making considerable headway, reducing the value of pasturage. It is difficult to account for this increase, but the suggestion has been made that

it is in part due to the indiscriminate burning of heather, the ashes of which, upon the scorched ground, make an excellent bed for the propagation of fern spores, carried thither by the wind or on the wool of grazing sheep. It is also stated that where sheep have been replaced by herds of cattle, the tender shoots are trampled and destroyed and the bracken gradually disappears.—JAMES RITCHIE, Royal Scottish Museum, Edinburgh.

#### A REGULAR ATTENDANT AT THE MEET.

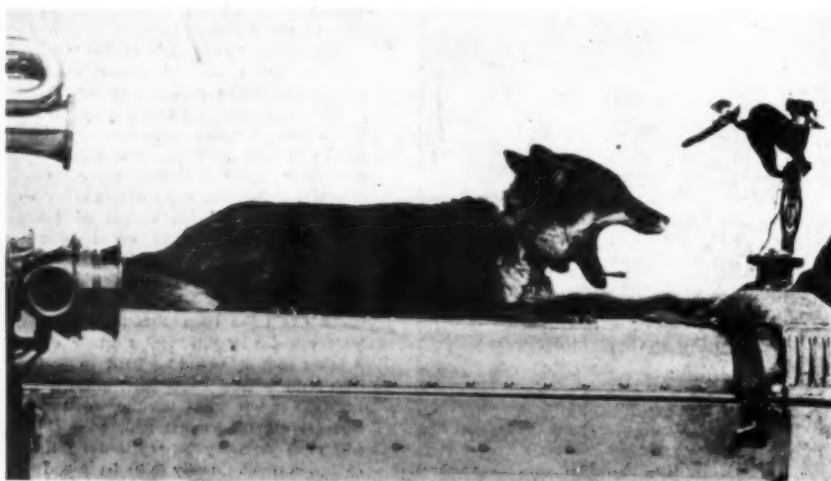
[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I am sending a photograph of a fox which attends meets of the Belvoir and Quorn. When at the meet he generally takes up his position on the bonnet of the car as shown in the picture. His yawn suggests that hunting bores him, but it is interesting as revealing the enormous gape of a fox's jaw.—B.

#### BOAT AND FIRE DRILL.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

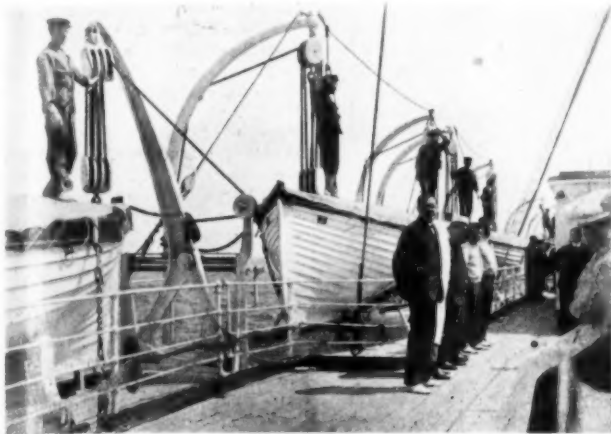
SIR,—Perhaps your readers will be interested in an account of the careful preparations which are made on the ships of many companies to cope with such a disaster as that of the ill-fated *Volturno*. About five o'clock one afternoon, on the R.M.S.P. *Arcadian*, as we were lying off Sundal, in Maurangerfjord, I was in the dark-room provided for passengers, and suddenly heard a tremendous



FEELING BORED.



noise, as if the whole ship's company were beating on tin baths. It was the fire alarm. I rushed out of the dark-room and saw the men line up on the promenade deck, then march up on to the boat deck and take their places. Within four minutes the railings had been removed, the davits swung out, and two boats were in the water; then boat after boat was swung out with extreme celerity. Everything was done with naval precision and speed, as, indeed, one would expect on a ship flying the flag of the Royal Naval Reserve, whose captain is also a captain in the Royal Naval Reserve, and manned by an English crew, of whom a large proportion are Naval Reservists. The immense difficulty of safely launching boats when there is a heavy sea, which was responsible for the heavy loss of life on the *Volturno*, will be seen from the second photograph, taken from the starboard launch gangway, which shows two of the boats in the water and one on the davits forty feet above them. To lower a boat from more than the height of a house when the ship is rolling heavily is a feat requiring the greatest skill; and it says much for the efficiency of the officers and crew



AT THEIR STATIONS.



LOWERED.

of the *Carmania* that they were able to lower a boat and get her back on to the boat deck of the huge 19,000-ton liner in a big sea, after the loss of all the oars but three, and for the bravery of the first officer, Mr. Gardner, and his boat's crew that they made the attempt in the face of such odds; while the smartness and bravery of the German sailors, who kept two of the *Grosser Kurfurst's* boats out all night in the gale picking up stragglers, are equally memorable. I should add that the first photograph was taken of boat drill off the West Coast of Africa.—W. H.

## A TREE-CLIMBING FOX.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—In last week's *COUNTRY LIFE* the tree-climbing capacity of foxes is referred to by one of your correspondents. I have not yet seen recorded a more remarkable feat of climbing by a fox than that which I witnessed a few weeks ago. I was walking through a covert with two dogs when I caught sight of a dog fox moving along the bough of an oak tree about thirty feet from the ground. He appeared quite at home in the branches, and, moving along to the end of the bough he crouched down among the leaves. As the tree was perfectly straight and had no branches for a considerable height from the ground, I was at a loss to know how he got up there and also how he was going to descend. The latter problem

was solved on the approach of some cottagers, whom I called to see the unusual sight. As soon as the fox saw them coming he moved swiftly down the branches, and, without hesitancy, leaped to the ground and disappeared in the undergrowth. I afterwards measured the distance from the ground to the first bough, and found that it was exactly eighteen feet. To reach the bough the fox could not have made use of more than three twigs, which were of the slenderest description. The girth of the tree was five feet two inches at a height of six feet, the trunk was straight and the tree was standing by itself. As I did not see the first part of the climb, I am unable to say how the feat was accomplished. I can only surmise that Reynard, surprised by the dogs, was chased, and in his panic went up the tree at one rush, much as a cat would. This took place in the parish of Bradfield near Reading.—W. T. STEVENS.

## "SNIPE DRUMMING."

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—An interesting article in a back number of *COUNTRY LIFE* has been brought to my notice on "Snipe Drumming." I think that perhaps the following observation may possibly interest some of your readers in view of your previous remarks on the subject: While fishing in June or July last at Ringwood, I was just sitting down to lunch at the edge of the river, with my back up against an old boat moored to the bank, when I heard a faint drumming behind me. The fields all round were long grass, ready to cut, so that I was practically hidden from view of a bird coming up behind me. The drumming grew louder and louder, until it seemed to be over my head, when on looking round, I saw that a snipe was sitting on a notice board just behind me, some nine feet high, and so close that I could easily have touched it with my rod. But what surprised and interested me was that the bird, which was sitting on the top of the notice board and outlined most plainly against the sky, was continuing to drum while on the post. And what struck me most of all was the fact that the bird's throat continued to move, as if the sounds were emitted from the vocal cords. This looks as if the drumming does not altogether, at any rate, come from the tail feathers, as suggested by some.—DUDLEY S. A. COSBY.

## THE DEPREDATIONS OF THE GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I enclose a photograph of a great black-backed gull taken in the Outer Hebrides. In this district the birds are much persecuted because of the harm that they are supposed to do, not only by robbing other birds' nests, but because they are said to destroy young lambs. In evidence of this, one keeper told me that he had shot a gull that was carrying the kidneys of a freshly killed lamb, but when pressed he owned that he had never seen a gull attack a living animal. According to the writers of the report of the survey of Clare Island (Proceedings Royal Irish Academy) *Larus marinus* is poisoned on the Mullet because "it is said to attack young lambs" (the italics are mine), and my friend, Miss Sargent, tells me that it is persecuted for the same reason along the Kenmare estuary, so that the belief in its depredations is widespread. I have, however, never met anyone who has actually seen this gull attack a living lamb (of course, like many of this family, it will devour carrion), and am inclined to think that it often pays the penalty of sins committed by the hooded crow, raven or fox.



THE MUCH PERSECUTED "COB."

Except for the heron, the "cob" is the largest and most stately of our commoner wild birds and as, with the exception of certain districts in the West of Ireland, it is becoming scarcer in this country it seems a pity that it should be unduly persecuted.—MAUD D. HAVILAND.

## ROUNDING HOUNDS' EARS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—The subject of docking horses has been a stock one for long, and a great many people have expressed opinions upon it, temperate and otherwise. What effect this has had in working the change in the fashion which has certainly taken place I cannot say; possibly small, as fashions change from time to time with little apparent reason. I have for long hoped that the fashion for rounding the ears of hounds might change, as it did in the similar case of the coach-horses of long ago; but a little discussion of the subject *might* help, and such a hope must be my excuse for this letter. In discussing the case of the docked horse, some ingenious people did find what they considered practical reasons for the fashion. Among them, if I remember rightly, someone stated that it "strengthened the back," but in the case of the hounds I think it would trouble the inventive power of even this individual to give a seemingly reasonable excuse. The only colourable excuse I have ever heard made—and I think this is quite a common one—is that it prevents the ears being torn by thorns in covert. This, however, is a complete fallacy, as, if anything, the rather thickened edge left after rounding is much more apt to get scratched than the soft and pliant, natural ear. I think any M.F.H. who does not round—and there are a considerable number, though generally Masters of what might be called unfashionable packs—will bear out this statement. Among the Midland packs I believe I am right in saying that Mr. Fernie's are unrounded—they were a few years ago, at least—and few countries could be found where there was more opportunity for torn ears, what with their blackthorn coverts and fences. Of course, there is a humanitarian side to the matter; but I must admit to feeling rather shy of dealing with this side of a sporting question, but my own point of view is an artistic one more than anything else, and on this side I cannot conceive any reason being given in favour of the mutilation. Certainly one gets accustomed to almost any fashion, and in this particular one I should not wonder if a considerable proportion of those who ride to hounds are so accustomed to the ear as usually seen in the field, that they are quite unaware that it is artificial, or what a much more beautiful thing a hound's head is as Nature intended it. Most Masters would be somewhat shocked if they succeeded to a pack of docked foxhounds; but a real colourable reason could be given for such a mutilation, in the fact that it was to save the end of their sterns from bleeding, as they invariably do when drawing thick covert. Among show dogs, within my recollection, cutting ears has been discontinued, and I hope I may live to see the reformation extend to the foxhound, one of the most beautiful of all dogs, and one which in other respects has escaped most of the vagaries of fashion that have ruined many other breeds.—G. DENHOLM ARMOUR.

## IN-BREEDING AMONG GROUSE.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—May I inform "Hill Man" that I have been a breeder of poultry and pigeons for over half a century, and carried on in-breeding to the tenth generation, but have not found in-breeding affect the number of cocks or hens bred.—G. R.

## CHANGE OF COLOUR IN FISH.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I wonder if you could give me any information about a strange transformation that I have seen take place in pike. When taken and killed, a pike will occasionally change from its ordinary colour into a kind of dirty, transparent yellow, and after about ten minutes return to its former colour again. I have asked a certain old boatman who is a local authority on fish, who said that although he had often observed this, he had never discovered a reason for it. Perhaps you will be able to enlighten me.—R. G. DEVEREUX.

[Most fishes are endowed with the power of changing colour by reflex action under various stimulations, and some even rival the chameleon in this respect.

The agony of death sufficiently accounts for the change observed in the above instance. The rapid transformation is brought about by the play of the chromatophores, pigment cells which contract and expand, and rise and sink in the skin. Black and yellow pigments combine to form the normal greenish colour of the pike; when the black pigment sinks into the deeper layers of the skin the fish appears yellow.—ED.]

## WASPS EATEN BY CAGE BIRDS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—A *propos* of the caged blackbird dying from eating a wasp, I might mention that a red cardinal of mine managed to devour a great many during September, cracking them into "smithereens" with his powerful bill before swallowing them, and a Jamaica mockingbird (*Mimus orpheus*) has also swallowed several, knocking the life out of them before doing so. But a very much more unnatural performance is that of a dachshund belonging to my brother, which, curling her lips well away from her teeth, snaps at wasps, maims them, and then, giving vent to a curious whine, attracts her master's attention to the wasp she has dropped on the ground for him to give the finishing touch to its execution!—HUBERT J. ASTLEY.

## THE NEGLECTED TOADFLAX.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—A bank thrown up against a hedge last spring, sixteen yards long and one yard high, set with large clumps of yellow toadflax about four feet apart, with big blue periwinkles falling down between, is just now yielding wonderful results, and makes one wonder why do we not all grow toadflax in our gardens? Is it because it needs wide spaces to show off its beauty, or is it because the gardener looks upon *Linaria vulgaris* as a weed? Yet even a weed that freely offers blossom all through the summer and late autumn is worthy of consideration, and deserves to have some place assigned it where it may flourish to its heart's content; and if it cannot be allowed to grow beside the old red bergamot in the herbaceous border, set apart in the wild garden it will shine out like lighted candles against the darkness of the hedge behind. Seen from a distance, when growing on a height, what with its spiked leaves and pointed spurs, there is no plant quite so suggestive of delicate architectural spires. In combination with blue lobelia and red geranium it is far more effective than the conventional *calceolaria*, and if it is found to spread too rapidly, well! surely it can always be pulled up and given away or burned. Anyhow, its introduction to the garden is an experiment worth trying. The beautiful foliage provides a pleasing background to other flowers earlier in the year, and then, when it has already done more than many a more notable plant to help the year along, it offers profusely two or three months of unusual and attractive colour. There is no other wild flower which can exactly be compared to this erect herbaceous plant, with its numerous grass-like leaves of glaucous hue and its dense clusters of pale yellow and deep orange blossom. The flowers resemble those of the antirrhinum, except that the corolla is spurred at the base, and that in the matter of "opening and

shutting its mouth" the snapdragon has the advantage. In fact, the only serious objection that has ever been raised to this lovely and neglected plant was that of a gardener's little girl, aged four, who derived much amusement from pinching the snapdragon flowers between her finger and thumb and watching the palate open, as if in imitation of the fabulous monster from which it derives its name. "Don't you like toadflax?" asked a lady who found the child ruthlessly "weeding" them away from the roadside. "No; I don't," was the unhesitating reply. "They won't open and shut their mouths properly."—VIOLET O'CONNOR.



A BEAUTIFUL HOUND SPOILED BY ROUNDING.



A VERY ORDINARY HOUND WITH UNROUNDED EARS.

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